

inside SOCCER

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Secret TV deal 'on the drawing board'

Inside Soccer has been advised of as yet secret plans for the launch of a full time soccer TV channel.

The project is the brainchild of a prominent soccer entrepreneur but our source was reluctant to divulge too many details which at this stage are still considered to be "highly confidential."

"But I can tell you that the whole plan is well down the pipeline," said our source - himself a well-connected soccer insider.

"It seems that the plans involve a non-stop soccer channel on an existing cable TV network.

"The channel would feature European, South American and also Australian soccer."

And speculation immediately linked the venture with the Optus channel which is still in its infancy although its numbers are growing in Sydney and Melbourne.

"Of course, it is early days yet, and the venture is by no means a certainty but it would be very exciting if it did happen.

"It is on the drawing board and is being considered very seriously by two rival cable networks - that is how close it is just now."

NOT JUST ANOTHER RE-HASH EAGLES

By Bruce Campbell

AN OFFICIAL involved with the recent attempt to enter a new club into the Ericsson Cup has promised that it is not just another way of getting an established club in through the back door.

Parramatta Eagles administrator Vince Balzon has refuted claims being made by rival Ericsson Cup clubs that the bid being currently fronted by politician Gary Punch is nothing more than another shot by Parramatta Eagles.

"It was unfortunate that Parramatta Eagles were given the chop from the NSL a few years ago," Balzon told *Inside Soccer*.

"But this is not just another way of us getting back in.

"Everybody agrees that Parramatta was wronged

by David Hill but this club has moved on since then."

The move from the Parramatta consortium came at lightning speed as news of Sydney United's financial woes hit the headlines throughout the nation.

But even officials at Soccer Australia were stunned with the speed with which Parramatta moved.

Last Monday the consortium called an impromptu press conference with just one hour's notice.

That heralded a visit to SA's Sydney Football Stadium HQ where the formal bid was placed on the table.

It is believed that SA has asked for similar financial assurances that Auckland Kings have pledged.

That would see the new club need \$1million - even before they signed a single player.

That would sky rocket their likely first season budget to just over \$2million - a staggering amount considering that Parramatta Eagles operated on \$600,000 in its own NSL stint.

But with Parramatta Leagues Club ready to commit to \$1.5million over a three year period as the new club's major sponsor it is a distinct reality.

"The Leagues club wouldn't necessarily spilt that money up over three years," added Balzon.

"We realise that there are a lot of expenses in the first year which won't be repeated."

Balzon refused to confirm the \$1million asking figure by the ASF but has



Bid not just Parramatta Eagles in disguise says official

surprisingly come out in favour of the new entity being non-ethnic.

"I couldn't agree with that thought more," he said.

"If it was just a re-vamped Eagles it wouldn't work.

"We will keep our own identity in the NSWFSF but are more than pre-

pared to throw our resources behind this venture.

"Our members know that we could never mount a bid like this on our own and this is our only way of being involved in an NSL club again."

The new club, which wants to play out of Par-

ramatta Stadium, is confident of being announced as an entrant at the end of February - and are ready to take their place as early as next season.

Phone calls to the office of Parramatta Leagues boss Dennis Fitzgerald were not returned.

KICK OFF

THE NSW SUPER LEAGUE season is gearing up for its kick off in just over a week's time with officials predicting the biggest and best for some years.

"This is going to be a cracker of a year," said NSWFSF supremo Peter Gray. "This is the last year that we will play in the Ericsson Cup season and from October on we'll be running with the national league.

"I believe that summer soccer is the way to go so this is a very important year for our clubs. Our standard has always been very high but there is stake with talk of a national second division coming into being. Super League clubs have invested a great deal of money into our competition and it will show at the box office this season."

The first round looks good value with champions Bankstown City at home to Eastern Suburbs.

Highly fancied Macarthur Rams are at home to Central Coast while a sell-out looks on the cards from the Bonyrigg v Bankstown City clash.

The other three games are Ryde City v Fairfield Bulls, Leichhardt Tigers v Parramatta Eagles and Canterbury v Sutherland.

Inside Soccer will provide a full review and preview of the competition which kicks off on 06 February.



GOLDBERG DENIES TAKEOVER CLAIMS

Crystal Palace chairman Mark Goldberg has strongly refuted suggestions chief executive Jim McAvoy is poised for a takeover of the struggling London club.

McAvoy was only appointed two months ago to help resolve Palace's financial problems, but now considers his position "untenable" as he admits he is "in fundamental disagreement over the direction and management of the club."

But the man who also owns the major share in NSL club Northern Spirit has no intention in throwing in on the towel on Palace, either to McAvoy or any other party interested in purchasing his 85% stake in the club.

Goldberg said: "A

takeover by McAvoy or anyone else is not possible as I am not selling my stake in Crystal Palace.

"I am as committed to Crystal Palace today as I was when I invested in it last summer.

"I have a job to do at Crystal Palace and I am staying until that job is done. My five-year plan is still valid and I intend to see it through."

Goldberg's financial crisis has fuelled stories in Australia that he will pull out of Northern Spirit investment.

The Ericsson Cup new guys have taken in the league by storm in their first year drawing huge crowds to North Sydney Oval despite some very moderate on-field results.

INSIDE SOCCER Australia's
weekly soccer Bible

Stop press

AUSTRALIA DAY FIXTURES

All played Tuesday 26 January

South Melbourne v Adelaide Sharks

Bob Jane Stadium 6pm

Adelaide City v Carlton

Hindmarsh Stadium 7pm

Northern Spirit v Perth Glory

North Sydney Oval 7.30pm

Brisbane Strikers v Sydney Olympic

Suncorp Stadium 7pm

Sydney United v Marconi Fairfield

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Canberra Cosmos v Newcastle Breakers

Bruce Stadium 7pm

Wollongong Wolves v Melbourne Knights

Brandon Park 6.30pm



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New regional format proposed

By John White

AUSTRALIAN soccer is full steam ahead for the introduction of a second tier competition.

"It has to happen," a leading ASF official told *Inside Soccer*.

"But I see a different alternative for the structure of that league.

"I would rather see a competition of 12 teams for the first division.

"Then there would be two second divisions based on Victoria and New South Wales.

"At the end of the season the bottom team from Division 1 would go into a play-off with the two winners in the regional second tier leagues."

The system has a lot to commend it, not the least being that it would extend the top echelon to a possible 36 teams - without stretching the existing club financial structure or playing base because the teams would, in effect, be graded.

"I would like also to see the Division 1 competition run slightly different," we were told.

"After playing the normal home and away round I would like to see another round introduced by splitting the teams into two regional groups and playing each other again. This would provide all the local derbies that the fans like and bring in extra revenue for the clubs without the expense of interstate travel involved."

At the present time the plan hasn't been put forward to the Board of Commissioners but that is likely to happen sooner rather than later.

Since first reported in *Inside Soccer* some months ago the public imagination for a second division has really been captured.

The actual implementation of such a plan, and who controls it, was always likely to be the stumbling block.



However, this latest plan - which stems from the corridors of power at Paddington - is a sure indication that the game's top officials are working

out how to do it - rather than if.

And with the New South Wales Super League set to go into summer format this Octo-

ber there is now a matter of urgency involved.

The subject is likely to be hot on the agenda of SA's February round of meetings.

Turner Cup battles to 21st year

By Bruce Campbell

THE FUTURE of the world's biggest soccer knockout tournament has been threatened after the financial collapse of a previous sponsor.

Last season the Bill Turner Cup competition, which is open to school teams up to the age of fifteen, fielded 738 entries - a world record.

But the withdrawal of financial sponsorship left tournament organisers desperately seeking a new life line.

"At one stage we offered to call a halt to the Cup," says tournament founder Bill Turner.

"Last year was our twentieth but we told the schools that one option we were faced with was to pack up. They told us that they wouldn't hear of it and now we are getting set for our twenty first season."

But this will be a season in which the grim realities of lack of commercial sponsorship will bite hard into one of the greatest institutions in



Marconi's Sean Babic: he found fame in the Bill Turner Cup

Australian sport.

In past years the Bill Turner Cup has been able to off travel subsidies to competing teams.

This year the reality, unless there is a sponsor on the horizons, is a lot grimmer.

"To do it as a full scale national competition, which we were asked to look at by our previous sponsors, would cost about \$150,000," said Turner. "To retain our status quo costs between \$40-50,000 and to run it

without any travel expenses costs about \$35,000."

Without that kind of commercial commitment Bill Turner and his army of volunteers are set to run year 21 on a shoestring but are still hopeful

of finding a last-minute saviour.

"We have been close to getting major sponsorship and in one case we were down to the final two - and I was beaten by a pig! The pig was called Babe and I suppose that is the way it goes," laughs the former school teacher who has retained his sense of humour through it all.

And over the years the Bill Turner Cup has featured some pretty talented names in its finals series. Recent years have seen the likes of Sean Babic and Jason Culina grace the Newcastle-held final.

The 1999 competition proper kicks off in April although some pre-qualification games will be staged in March before the end of Term 1. Once again the final series is set for Newcastle's Australia park Stadium and this year the semi finals will be held on Tuesday 7 September with the final and third and place play off being staged on the Wednesday.

Will pledges to back England's World Cup bid

By Mark Bradley,

The futility of the 'cash-for-votes' scandal at the Football Association was clearly shown last Wednesday after Scotland's David Will was unanimously given a two-year extension as the Home Nations' FIFA vice-president.

The motive behind ousted FA chairman Keith Wiseman agreeing a £3.2million loan to the Welsh FA was alleged to have been to obtain support for his failed bid to replace Will on the executive of football's world governing body.

Wiseman had apparently felt that the Scotsman was not doing

enough to promote England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup.

However, the FA's new interim leadership of Geoff Thompson and David Davies proved that there is now a new dawn as they supported Will, who then proclaimed his complete support for the 2006 campaign.

The Scotsman, whose current term as the Home Nations' representative on FIFA's executive committee had been due to expire next year, was given the go-ahead by England, Wales and Northern Ireland to stay on until after the 2002 World Cup.

Will said: "As far as I am concerned, this is the

end point of all past problems.

"The things that have happened over the past few months have all been occurring over my head and without my knowledge.

"Now I have been given a unanimous vote of confidence by all four of the Home Nations and there is a renewed spirit of co-operation."

Will, who was even invited by Sports Minister Tony Banks to attend a meeting of the 2006 campaign team last Tuesday, pledged: "I will be promoting England's World Cup bid as best I can."

Whereas Wiseman was clearly unable or unwilling

to work closely with Will, a spirit of bridge-building now exists at the FA, following his enforced resignation.

Davies, the FA's interim executive director, added: "There was a meeting of minds of all the Home Nations."

"We are delighted at David Will's very positive attitude to the World Cup bid and we look forward to working very closely with him on that and other matters relating to UEFA and FIFA in the future."

Under special privileges given to Britain since the end of the Second World War, the Home Nations are allowed to nominate a member of the FIFA executive between them, a position filled by Will since 1990.

Other countries may seek to end this privileged position at a special FIFA congress in July, but an amendment of FIFA statutes would be required to do so.

Biskic back at Knights

By Paul Millar

Affable Melbourne Knights coach Vid Horvat quit the struggling NSL side last Tuesday saying he has to shoulder the blame for the club's poor showing this season.

Horvat, who joined the club just before the start of the season, had earlier offered his resignation but the board refused realising he had little to work with.

After slumping to second bottom the club yesterday accepted the former players' resignation.

"This is life in soccer, it was difficult but I have to blame myself there are no excuses in this game it was the right thing to do," Horvat said.

Horvat tried desperately to sign players for the threadbare and young Knights' squad but the club had little money to spend and is still waiting for its share of the Mark Viduka transfer to Glasgow Celtic.

"Maybe it's the wrong decision, people asked me to stay but I was making too many compromises," Horvat

said.

Horvat recommended that Joe Biskic, his assistant and a legend at the club, take over as senior coach.

The club has asked Horvat to stay on and take control of a youth development program at the club but he will return to the United States or Canada to pursue his coaching career.

"I've invested a lot of time over there, the money is good and I still think I can do a good job there," he said.

Horvat arrived only weeks before the start of the season and said it would take him at least five or six games to mould the side to his style.

But inexperience and some unlucky breaks cost the Knights in the games they could argue they should have won.

The Sunshine side surprisingly won three of



Biskic: the legend is back

the eight opening games but never won a match in six weeks and Horvat, who had little to work with, was under increased pressure.

"People say we're unlucky, but you do not talk about luck we just did not get the results," he said.

He believed he had moulded the team into a competitive outfit which had the potential to improve.

"I'm sure they will do well under Biskic but in the end I just had to do it, I had to go," Horvat said.

Kewell Target

Aussie super kid Harry Kewell is the latest target for Italian Serie A mega club Juventus.

Scouts for the wealthy Italian club watched the Leeds United teenager in action last week-end - and came away with rave reports.

The Aussie has rarely been out of the headlines in his brief career to date, being capped for Australia under Eddie Thomson even before he made his full club debut.

Hill and the Breakers bid

Former Soccer Australia chief David Hill has advised a consortium against buying Ericsson Cup club Newcastle Breakers, but believes the national soccer club would be a good investment.

Hill, who quit as SA chairman last year, admitted he had been approached by a group of businessmen who were interested in buying out the club.

"They were very well capitalised and they asked me to advise them, but I did not think that it was an investment that suited

them," Hill said.

He said another syndicate was now well advanced in negotiations to take control of the Breakers.

"I'm not saying it was not a good investment, it was just not for them," he said.

"Newcastle is a good investment, the supporters there have been through some lean times but they still turn up, they have a tremendous community loyalty."

Breakers chairman Bill Collins, who is a major shareholder in the club, said he was due to meet

with a business consortium later to discuss the sale of the team and possibly the stadium.

"They are well backed, they are people from a soccer background and people outside the game which is a good mix as having too much passion is not good," he said.

"They are not getting into this for fun, it's an investment opportunity and they want the Newcastle Breakers to be a force in this country and too remain a force," Collins said.

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Bruce Campbell

IT'S ONLY AN OPINION

IT IS NOW time that a lot of people in Australia soccer faced up to the realities of life; we either introduce promotion – or perish.

This isn't a plea for the introduction of something which I believe is as inevitable as the turning tides, rather a plea for some sanity to come back into the game.

Too often sport breeds passion at the expense of sound, solid commonsense.

The plight of Sydney United has hit the headlines and rightly so, although some would still insist that it doesn't do the 'promotion' of the game much good if our ills are aired in public.

What should the press do? Continue to perpetuate the lie after the bailiffs have moved in?

I hope that there is some kind of rescue for United, but deep in my heart of hearts I think it is all over, red rover.

I can recall a conversation with Branko Culina a couple of years ago when I urged him to consider going to Canberra Cosmos.

The reason – I thought that United were finished then.

I wish them no ill, in fact quite the opposite but heaven knows it is tough in the hard world of semi professional soccer in Australia.

There are clubs in Australia who are struggling week after week just to balance their books which, with the help of lending institutions,

often gurgles towards the million dollar in the red mark.

At the other end of the scale there are the high flyers of the soccer world, the Northern Spirits, the Perth Glories.

Sure, they have their own problems but cash flow through the turnstiles isn't one of them.

Just a few seasons ago South Melbourne and Marconi Fairfield were the big boys of the NSL, the richest of the rich.

But not any longer. The signs are there that they no longer are able to garner the best players with just a phone call; there are ambitious, and cashed up, rivals in the queue now also.

It isn't my place to point the finger at struggling clubs but the ones who seem to ring of financial security include South Melbourne, Marconi, Perth Glory, Northern Spirit and Adelaide City.

That is five out of a possible fifteen.

After that come Carlton and Newcastle who could be a whole lot healthier if their proposed buy-outs go ahead as this issue goes to print.

Then come the rest.

That is reality.

And if Auckland make it to next season's league then there will be another for the top category – simply by virtue of the fact that they will be guaranteeing \$1 million to ensure that they are cashed up.

The fate of the others seems to be tenuous at the very least but salvation is to hand with the introduction of a second national division.

That would allow struggling clubs to find their own platform

without having to match it with the big money guys who are just getting richer and richer, the gulf becoming wider and wider.

Maybe there is call for the league to be reduced in size and I would welcome that reduction when the Division 2 structure is in place because we need more top level clubs, not less – but we have to help the clubs not destroy them.

Division 2 will allow clubs to consolidate their position at a level higher than Ericsson Cup before making the big jump.

After all, how the hell can you come out of a winter semi-amateur league into a summer semi-pro league which has a sprinkling of full pro clubs?

I suspect that over the next five seasons, as Australian soccer tries to cope with the demands being made on it as it gathers momentum in the mainstream of Australian sporting life, that a few more clubs will slide the slippery slope out of the top league.

I just hope that there is somewhere for them to go because financial ruin is not a pretty thought.

WELL SOUTH KOREA have come and gone. At least as far as the Olyroos are concerned.

Whatever you thought of the exercise it was invaluable for our coaching staff.

I kind of think that for some of our hopefuls it will be the last time that they pull the green and gold over their heads.

Some of our squad were just not up to scratch.

Raul Blanco knows that too, but he has given those players every opportunity.

Now comes the time to be ruthless. The honeymoon is over.

SHORTLY INSIDE SOCCER will introduce a reader competition in which we will go looking for the best ever Australian players, the best ever Australian team.

This will be the Team of the Millennium and it will give soccer fans the chance to indulge in just a wee bit of wishful thinking.

How would the Hakoah side of the early '70s go against Prague of the late '50s, or even Metters of the war years?

How would Eddie Thomson's late '70s Sydney City go against Zoran Matic's Adelaide City of a decade ago?

It is the kind of debate that fans love to engage in and with the generous support of a major sponsor we are about to introduce a reader-based competition which should prove a real talking point.

And who was the greatest Australian soccer player of all time; Craig Johnston, Mark Bosnich, Reg Date, Judy Masters, Joe Marston or Ray Baartz?

It's a great subject, isn't it?

Watch our pages for details which are being formulated just now.

In the meantime if you want to drop a line on your own favourites

Soccer's Panacea

The unfortunate financial demise of Sydney United and the often-alleged turmoil surrounding clubs like Canberra, Newcastle, Gippsland, and Carlton, indicates that there is still much heartache ahead for the NSL and the long suffering supporters of Australian soccer.

Whilst many clubs continue to face the perennial problems of poor crowds and insufficient resources, the quick fix solutions offered up by a succession of club and NSL administrators appears to be the same every time a club runs into difficulty.

How many times have we heard that clubs need to lose their ethnic tag, a change of name, a change of venue, a change of colours and so on?

Frequently fuelled by media reports, such quick fixes are touted as the panacea that will propel the game and the clubs to new heights.

Yet as the Sydney United situation exemplifies, such "quick fixes" often aggravate the problem.

It is disturbing therefore to read John White's report of the imminent changes at Carlton (Inside Soccer 12/1/99).

Again we are offered a range of unsubstantiated reasons as to why the club fails to attract fans.

The club is seen as "too Italian" whilst "Italians favour Bulleen", "Anglo - Aussies don't feel comfortable" and "the traditional soccer fan is apathetic".

Again the proposed quick fix solutions are the same, a change of name and venue.

What is the basis of such claims?

For instance just who are the "traditional" soccer fans who are currently overtaken by apathy at the thought of Carlton?

Why is the club seen as being "too Italian"?

How do we know Italians favour Bulleen over Carlton and that Anglos don't feel com-

fortable?

More importantly, what evidence is there that a change of venue and name will ameliorate these problems?

This is not to say that there should be no change, but rather that any change needs to be considered and based on substantiated facts.

The experience of many past and present NSL clubs indicates that his has not been the case.

Contrast the recent histories of Sydney United, Carlton and so on, with that of Perth Glory, Northern Spirit or even the ARL Club, the Melbourne Storm.

Proper planning and research to identify target audiences, backed with strong marketing and a potentially exciting and entertaining on-field team is a key feature of all these organisations.

When was the last time an NSL club or Soccer Australia, actually asked the fans or even potential punters what they thought?

While this requires resources which most clubs do not have, those who opt for the quick-fix at the expense of more appropriate solutions run the risk of alienating their existing supporter base.

Let's take heed of the Sydney United experience and the Perth Glory success story.

Lets get it right.

M Grise
Northcote VIC

(In the main I couldn't agree with you more. As to the article you mentioned only the facts are reported, there was no editorialising. Our reporter spoke to a number of people, he gave him answers and he filed the copy.

I know that Canberra Cosmos did a market survey because I person-

Your WRITE

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All correspondence must include your name and address – although we will print letters under nom-de-plumes.

Letters on any football related subject are welcome but should reach us by Friday morning prior to print to reach the next deadline.

ally organised it – and the answers were VERY interesting. I also know that they were tossed straight in the bin. Again just the facts, m'am. – Ed).

2010 World Cup

I hope to see Australia win the battle to host the 2010 World Cup.

I believe that those chances would be enhanced if a 40 team format was elected.

Last year's tournament was very competitive, with only two sides lose all three of their pool games, Nigeria qualified top of their group and two more African teams, Cameroon and Morocco, appeared to be denied a place in the second round by refereeing blunders.

The Asian teams all held their own and although they may still be a step behind the European and Latin American sides they are gaining ground.

Let's not forget, they have two thirds of the world's population.

I propose a 40 team tournament for 2010 divided into eight pools of five.

This might include the hosts, defending champions, 16 European sides, six African, six South American, four North American, five Asian and one from Oceania.

The five team format would create a more cut-throat atmosphere in pool play and provide all teams with an extra game.

Providing they qualify as Oceania champions in Australia's absence, New Zealand should be host of whatever pool they are drawn in.

The inclusion of New Zealand teams in the Ericsson Cup would help develop the game across the Tasman.

I believe the best way to achieve this would be

to go back to the drawing board, as rugby did in devising the highly successful Super 12, and ultimately restrict each major city to one franchise, with perhaps a second team in the major metropolitan centres of Sydney and Melbourne.

Each team would therefore carry the hopes and expectations of an entire city onto the field with it and attendances and television audiences should reflect this.

A league might initially comprise Sydney Olympic, Sydney United, South Melbourne, Melbourne United (remaining Melbourne clubs), Brisbane Strikers, Adelaide City, Perth Glory, Newcastle Breakers, Wollongong Wolves, Canberra Cosmos, Northern Spirit, Gippsland Falcons, Tasman, Auckland Kings, Wellington and Christchurch.

Quentin Poulsen
Wellington
NEW ZEALAND

(There is a lot of merit in an expanded World Cup

format. The jump to first 24, then 32 teams, was enormously successful. And there is no doubt that FIFA is facing increasing pressure from rival confederations who are dissatisfied at current allocations.

I would be surprised if Sepp Blatter has not already considered this at least as a logistical exercise.

I also think that the only way Australia will ever have a fully pro league is to adopt your suggestion in regard to expansion into New Zealand.

However, I think that issues like promotion and relegation, and a second division and other feeder leagues, need to be addressed first. – Ed).

Mitchell leads Scottish grounds upgrade

SCOTTISH club Dundee faces a race against time to preserve its Premier League status after it was confirmed the club will be relegated unless its Dens Park home is transformed by the summer.

SPL chief executive Roger Mitchell repeated his warning to clubs there will be no place in the top flight for those who fail to upgrade facilities.

First division leader Hibernian has everything in place to be promoted, leaving the real pressure on current eighth-placed Premier League side Dundee to refurbish an antiquated Dens Park.

The SPL has a July 31 deadline.

Mitchell said he had no doubt Dundee will manage that in time, even hinting the cut-off date might be flexible, but he emphasised if there is a major hitch the club will be demoted.

Mitchell also confirmed that should the likes of Falkirk and Ayr overhaul Hibs at the first division summit they would be wasting their time as promotion would be refused them.

The Scottish lead has followed a decade of general ground improvements throughout Britain.

Australian clubs have also improved their grounds significantly in recent years, a clear sign that sports fans want first class facilities.

Mitchell said of the Scottish situation: "The state of grounds at, say Clydebank and Stranraer, are appalling, a woeful result of people being complacent in the past and taking their fans for granted.

"Grounds like that would be unacceptable in the Premier League, it is not a question of their safety, we want to attract new fans into the game if we are serious about taking Scottish football forward."

The Scottish threat to relegate clubs for lack of supporter comfort comes after more than twenty years of a concerted shift by the NSL to upgrade standards.

That has hit a halt in recent years as criteria have been laid aside to let new clubs Perth, Carlton, Collingwood and Canberra compete in the Ericsson Cup.

BALLS, BALLS and more balls.

Soccer retailing giants Ray Baartz and Kingsgrove Sports are in hot pre-season form on the sales front.

REAL sales representatives David Gordon and Chadd Porter told *Wheatley's World* that former Socceroo legend Baartz, Rod Grenfell and the team in Newcastle have moved all soccer ball indents recently.

Time for a 'top up' and it's only late January.

Sales guru Neil D'Costa (Kingsgrove) cleared out 1,000 balls in a day. Super work Neil - pity scoring runs for Northern Districts cricket team wasn't as simple.

SOCCER IS all about supporting your local team.

Northern Spirit supporters in the Manly Warringah Association have gone to the buses.

Every Friday night fans on the peninsula leave from Terry Hills, Mona Vale (pick up at Narabeen) and Cromer park (Manly's administrative headquarters) in a shuttle system over the Spit Bridge to Spirit's North Sydney Oval.

A free bus service from the North Sydney station to the oval also operates from late afternoon on match days.

NOT GETTING ENOUGH soccer coverage. Time to head for Europe.

Studies of the big six countries (UK, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain and Italy) reveal an overwhelming share of time is spent covering round ball action.

Close to 75% of sports programmes broadcast were devoted to football.

Formula 1 accounts for 15% with Rugby and Snooker the only other individual purist to be broadcast at 2.4% and 2.3% respectively.

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Now in its third successful year of operations and offering the chance for a school, club or individual to receive 'free' soccer balls is here.

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DOMINANT MARCONI DEFENDER Dominic Longo is the only Stallion to appear in all 16 matches for the Fairfielders.

Injury in the Brisbane clash to Longo, however, may force him out of the Australia Day clash against Sydney United.

Twin stopper Mark Babic was also replaced with a suspected broken toe in the 2-1 home defeat to the Strikers.

Add to the 'missing in action' list Mike Smith, Brendan Renaud, Ante Covic, Marcos Phillips and a worrying trend for coach Farina continues.

Skipper Brad Maloney has only recently returned after a three match lay-off as was Pan Keun Kim after not starting for six competition encounters.

Maybe its time for Frank Farina to elevate himself from the training pitch to the real thing.

THE POWER OF ONE?

No club in the Ericsson Cup Top Six has given one man the responsibility for coaching and selecting.

All the major clubs, and for that matter 70% of the 15 clubs in the 1998/99 season, have a two man combination at the helm.

At the half way mark the dynamic duos of Postecoglou/Halford (South Melbourne), Stang/D'avray (Perth Glory),



Mike Smith: the Marconi utility is one of a band of players at Bossley Park on the injury list

Mitchell/McKinna (Sydney Untried), Krncevic/Incantalupo (Carlton) are leading the way.

Hopefully there's safety in numbers as the season enters the second half.

ABC's MATCH OF THE DAY concentrates on the Sydney scene over the next three weeks.

Round 18: Sydney Olympic v Marconi

Round 19: Sydney United v Adelaide City

Round 20: Northern Spirit v Carlton

Not a bad decision given that Sydney sides occupy four of the seven top spots, Carlton is in red hot form and Adelaide City are perennial title contenders.

Don't be surprised if after Round 18 the top eight clubs haven't broken away into an elite band.

From then on its eight teams into six places and catch us if you can for the rest.

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS CONTINUE to impress despite a single goal loss to Sydney United last Friday.

Coach Lee Sterrey is doing things in style on and off the park.

Lent an older model Commodore several weeks ago, success for Sterrey resulted in a club sponsor handing over the keys of a new Berlina for Sterrey's comfort on the regular Newcastle to Sydney shuttles.

One wonders what further positive results or a new syndicate might mean for the aspiring young coach.

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Palace Aussies not under threat

By Trevor Marshallsea

Crystal Palace's Australian connection - Craig Moore, Craig Foster and Nick Rizzo - have vowed to push on with the financially embattled soccer club despite the effective departure of the man who lured them there, Terry Venables.

Moore, Foster and Rizzo are the first team regulars from a six-man Australian contingent which bloomed during Venables' seven month stay as manager, the others being the as-yet unregistered Steve Horvat, reserve grader Paul Harries and teenager Neil Childs.

Venables' job changed to the mysterious role of part-time coaching consultant as he and owner Mark Goldberg reached agreement last week to end his lucrative managerial contract owing to the club's steep monetary woes.

With Palace's on-field performance, currently 14th on the First Division table with just seven wins from 27 games, mirroring their tale of woe in the financial ledger, the Aussie trio could be excused for regretting their transfers.

This is especially so of Moore, who switched from Scottish Premier League high fliers Rangers, and 21-year-old Rizzo, who left behind a history of few opportunities at Premier League Liverpool only to see its new manager Gerard Houllier begin to blood more young players.

But the three have said that they remained firmly behind Palace and Venables' replacement Steve Coppell.

They also said they had heard no proof to support rumours that some wages were not being paid at the club.

"A player's career is never going to be smooth

running the whole time - there are going to be times when things don't go as planned," said Moore, a Soccerroo under Venables who has shared the Palace captaincy with Foster.

"But I can't say I've regretted coming down.

"It was the best possible choice for me at the time.

"Yes, Terry was a big reason for me coming down, but I've settled in at the club now and we've just got to get on with the job at hand."

Rizzo said he still felt vindicated in his move because he was now playing regular first team soccer.

"I've noticed the manager at Liverpool now is playing a lot of young guys, so I might've got a go in the first team if I'd stayed," Rizzo said.

"But I'm playing regular first team football so that's good. It would be different if I was stuck in



Craig Foster: just getting on with it

the seconds at Palace.

"It has been hard to concentrate on our football with everything that's been going on ... but hopefully things will get better."

Foster, who played under Venables at another cash strapped First Division club, Portsmouth, before both left last year, conceded the past two weeks had been "difficult".

"It was hard because it was so sudden," Foster said.

"One day everything was sweet, the next the press were speculating, the next Terry's left," he said.

"We're in a bit of shell shock at the moment, but

it's all done and dusted now, and we can just knuckle down and do the business.

"Terry did bring me to Palace and I've had a lot of experience with him and I like his style.

"But having said that, as a professional footballer you see managers come and go all the time, and you just have to get on with it."

Moore, Foster and Rizzo, who are signed until June, 2002, said they had not fielded offers from any other clubs.

"We're still happy to keep them on," said club secretary Mike Hurst.

"They're regular first team players and they're all good players."

Blatter plan to focus on quality

FIFA President Sepp Blatter has said that national sides should compensate clubs when they call up their players and insisted his plan to double the frequency of the World Cup would not hurt club football.

"I think it is correct that when the national associations are using the players, then the clubs which are paying the wages of the players should be rewarded for that," he said by telephone from Zurich ahead of a visit to meet soccer chiefs from all 15 former Soviet republics in Moscow.

"The national team should give something to the club when they're using the player."

Europe's wealthiest clubs are already exasperated by growing demands of representative competitions on their expensive playing staff and have reacted coolly to Blatter's idea, floated this month, to hold the World Cup

every two years not four.

Many national associations, for example in Africa, might be ill-placed to offer large compensation to clubs for top-flight players but the Swiss, who was elected last year, made it clear he is anxious to break down suspicion in Europe to his plans.

"This idea generally has been well received in the world of football - with the exception of some circles in Europe and especially from clubs and leagues.

"They feel that players would be contributing too much to national teams," he said.

He strongly denied, however, that more World Cups would add further to the load on players.

Indeed, he said, by coordinating a global soccer calendar and cutting down on the number of World Cup qualifying games, he hoped for less quantity, more quality.

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Okon to leave Lazio

Australian midfielder Paul Okon was quoted in a Belgian newspaper last week as saying he wanted to leave his Italian soccer club Lazio.

"There is a small chance that I'll stay (in Italy), maybe with Lazio which wants to discuss an extension of my contract, maybe with another club," Okon told Het Nieuwsblad newspaper.

"But honestly speaking, I'd rather leave.

"Preferably back to Belgium, or to the Netherlands."

Okon, 26, moved to Lazio in July 1996 from Belgian side Club Brugge after winning the award for Belgium's best player of the year in 1995.

But the player, whose contract expires at the end of June, has been sidelined with injuries for most of his Italian spell.

He said he was willing to accept a pay cut and was even consider-

ing going back to Australia if he could not find a suitable club.

As exclusively reported by *Inside Soccer* last December Australian club Marconi has shown an interest in signing their former player.

Marconi boss Tony Labbozzetta has said that he feels Okon needs to get back to peak form and fitness in a league in which the physical and mental strains of the Serie A are not evident.

World Footballer

The World Footballer of the Year 1998 will be chosen from among the World Cup stars Ronaldo, Davor Suker and Zinedine Zidane, according to the International Football Federation (FIFA).

The winner will be picked by national team coaches from around the world and will be announced at a football banquet in Barcelona on February 1.

Ronaldo, the Brazilian striker play-

ing for Inter Milan, was the winner in 1996 and 1997.

Suker, star of the Croatian team which finished third at the World Cup, plays for Real Madrid, while Zidane, the French playmaker, is at Juventus Turin.

Previous winners include Germany's Lothar Matthaus (1991), Marco van Basten of the Netherlands (1992), Italy's Roberto Baggio (1993), Romario of Brazil (1994) and George Weah of Liberia (1995).

Mark Schwarzer; the Socceroo outcast

By Fred Legget

THERE IS nothing Mark Schwarzer would like more than to don the green and gold of his country again, but he's not holding his breath.

Schwarzer, who was sensationally omitted from the squad which went out of the World Cup against Iran at the MCG last November, told *Inside Soccer* from his Harrogate home: "I love my country and am very proud to be an Aussie."

"I'd love to put an Australian strip back on, but if the powers that be decide that they don't want me, I can't do anything about that."

Schwarzer made some cutting comments at the time of his omission from the World Cup squad, and those close to him now concede that he regrets that he didn't bite his tongue at the time.

Said one close friend of the former Marconi custodian: "I've often heard Mark say that he is regretful about his comments regarding the Aussie national team."

"It was a heat of the moment statement made on the back of the disappointing news that he had

again been left out of the national squad.

"I'm sure he would jump at the chance to play again for Australia provided it didn't disrupt his career in England."

Schwarzer's club career has certainly taken off and although he now enjoys superstar status with the press, the newly married king of Riverside remains the same down to earth person he was in Australia.

"I guess we're not the stereo-typical football couple," says the Aussie keeper.

"We don't go partying, neither Paloma, my wife, nor I drive flash cars and to be honest we rarely go out."

"At the moment our lives revolve around exercising our two dogs, Jake and Toby, our two German Shepherds."

The Schwarzers currently live in Harrogate in Yorkshire, about an hour's drive from Middlesbrough, but are planning to move to a property near Leeds.

Explained Mark: "The new property is a country style farmhouse set in 2 acres."

There are stables, loads of guest accommodation for all the visiting Aus-

sies, and plenty of space for us and our dogs.

"It will be near the motorway which will make my journey north a lot easier and it's handy for Paloma, who has a career of her own in the finance industry, and is based in Leeds."

A far cry perhaps, from the two bedroomed flat he once shared in the Sydney suburb of Fairfield with ex Marconi teammate, and current Wolverhampton midfielder Steve Corica, but the affable Aussie still looks back on his early days with the Stallions with great affection.

"I still talk fondly about my time at Marconi, and can recall some hysterical trips away with the side," he says.

"I enjoyed every minute of it there."

Schwarzer was recently listed in *Business Review Weekly's* top 50 Australian Sports Star earners, but the Sydneysider hasn't forgotten his humble roots, and reportedly does more local community work for Middlesbrough than any other player, visiting schools and hospitals as well as being involved in community awareness with the local police.

The affable 26 year old's head has certainly not been turned by his success, and he appreciates probably more than most, just how well things have turned out for him since he arrived in England, after a difficult period in Germany.

"Life just seems to be going from great to unreal for us," said Mark.

"When we look back on the more difficult times, and they weren't that long ago, we often wondered how we coped with the pressure, frustration and disappointment."

"Sacrificing a wonderful home life in Australia, not to mention missing your family is bearable when things are going well for you financially and career wise."

"However, if you are homesick and missing friends and family and your career is going nowhere fast, then it really bites, and in the early days in Germany that's the situation we were in."

"Fortunately, everything is going unbelievably well for us at the moment, but I say that with a degree of caution, as I know how quickly fortunes can change."

"When you've seen bad times then it's easy to ap-

preciate good ones."

"Sometimes we have to pinch each other to make sure it's all true!"

True it certainly is, with reports that both Manchester United and Liverpool, arguably two of the biggest club sides in the world, have both made offers to acquire Schwarzer's services.

"Yes, I'm aware that there has been speculation about those clubs being interested in me and I'm flattered, but I'm very happy at 'Boro and have just signed a six and half year contract with them," said Schwarzer.

"I'm really enjoying my football at the moment, and there is a friendly jovial atmosphere about the club."

There's no doubt that Schwarzer has improved considerably since he left Australia, and much of that can be put down to coaching he receives from that prince of goalkeepers, Peter Shilton.

"You can't fail to improve if you are getting private tuition from Peter Shilton," says Schwarzer.

"He's totally professional - the other day the weather was bad and the players worked indoors, but he trained me out at the bottom training

pitch!"

Everything seems to be going right for the boy from Marconi, with a multimillion pound contract with Middlesbrough in his pocket and the likes of Liverpool and Manchester United knocking on his door.

Even so, one can't help but feel that Mark's happiness would only be complete if he was to be recalled to the Australian side.

The Australian selectors have the opportunity to do both Schwarzer and the Socceroos a favour by naming him in the squad for the Australia versus the Rest of the World game to be played at the opening of the Olympic Stadium in Sydney on June 12.

One can't help but pon-



der that it would be somewhat ironic if a player considered by both Manchester United and Liverpool as being good enough to play for either of these great sides, wasn't considered good enough to play for the Socceroos in this match.

Viduka is a Celt, Mandic is sick

Celtic finally resolved their two-month conflict with runaway striker Mark Viduka on Friday, saying he would be joining them seven weeks after his transfer from Croatia Zagreb.

The Scottish champions said Viduka, who fled Glasgow just days after his three million pounds move in December, claiming he was "depressed", had now assured the club he was ready to play for them.

"Marko has informed Celtic that he is fit, well and committed to being a Celtic player for the next four years and we look forward to his contribution on the pitch," said a statement.

The Australian international has spent the last 10 days in a London hotel as Celtic, who had refused to pay any money to Croatia Zagreb, sought guarantees from the player's agents about his return to the club.

Viduka returned to Zagreb after just one training session with Celtic following his transfer on December 3 and then spent another five weeks in his native Melbourne.

Viduka had an agreement with Croatia Zagreb

that he would receive half of any fee, but Celtic, wary of being stung again, wanted the player's money spread over the term of his contract.

Celtic refused to divulge the outcome of those negotiations.

"The contractual position is detailed, however, we will act to ensure every party receives what they are due from the deal," the club said.

Viduka said in the statement: "I have made a complete recovery from my illness and I want to get back to playing football. I want to do my best and put the last seven weeks behind me."

But as early as last Friday morning the chance of a speedy resolution to the Mark Viduka saga had nosedived again, with Celtic demanding the removal of the Socceroo striker's agent, Bernie Mandic.

Viduka's \$A7.76 million transfer from Croatia Zagreb to Celtic took on the dimensions of one of the most bitter in the Scottish league's history, as Celtic managing director Fergus McCann called on the International Management Group to take Mandic



out of play.

McCann has become increasingly dismayed by Mandic's actions in the 11 days since he and Viduka returned to Britain, after Viduka took a month off, only days after arriving in Glasgow, to deal with emotional stress he said he suffered in Zagreb.

The Celtic boss was incensed when Viduka, with Mandic present, attempted to board the team's flight to its mid-winter training camp in Spain last week.

And McCann has accused Mandic of spreading misinformation about the transfer talks which have spluttered along

since then while Viduka has remained in a London hotel.

"If IMG have any self respect for the company's name, they should get rid of this guy (Mandic)," McCann had said in a prepared statement.

"He's not helping Mark Viduka, IMG or Celtic."

"Mandic has dragged IMG's reputation into the gutter with his twisted, misleading remarks."

"This opinion would appear to be widely held," said McCann, referring to complaints the club says it has received about Mandic from journalists following the story.

"IMG appear unable to

control him."

Celtic said it had also submitted an official com-

plaint about Mandic to "the highest levels" of IMG, according to a club source.

Mandic hit back by saying Viduka, "sick and tired" of the impasse, was considering taking legal action if Celtic did not clear him to play soon.

The unorthodox Mandic gave a sarcastic response to McCann's demands for his removal, saying: "I'm terrified -- shaking in my boots."

He said his conduct throughout the negotiations had been "in the best interests of Mark Viduka".

Mandic said he did not know what misinformation McCann was alleging he had spread, saying: "He ought to be

specific if he's going to make allegations."

Viduka has met one of Celtic's demands, having been interviewed by a club doctor and psychologist and reportedly deemed fit to play.

The club had also warned the Viduka camp against taking the matter to FIFA's transfers committee, saying that because of a backlog of more than 400 cases, such a move may leave Viduka on the sidelines for around two years.

Celtic had also pointed out that if Viduka had the transfer quashed by the world governing body, he would again be a Croatia Zagreb player - a situation he would not want after the emotional stress which made him want to leave originally.

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inside
SOCCER

NSL STARS

Ray Younis Wollongong Wolves

By Andrew Davis

IN THIS DAY and age more and more players see the Australian Institute of Sport as a passport to the top flight.

The alternative for many is through the various grades of representative teams, starting all the way down at age eleven.

But the Ray Younis story is very different.

The young Wollongong right half cum centre forward has none of the advantages that rep football brings.

In fact he has some kind of a unique place in football, in that before he played for the Wolves he had never even seen an NSL match.

It has meant he has had to work harder on his game in the last two years than most and he has learnt lessons from it, lessons that young kids playing football and their coaches should listen to.

Ray Younis was born in 1974 and grew up in the area around Auburn in Sydney.

"My first soccer team was St Johns Soccer team in Auburn.

"I started as a kid at central midfield and

whilst I was there I played many positions from striker right through to sweeper.

"I was there for twelve years and never took it seriously.

"My pace and natural ability meant I was better than most of the kids.

"I never thought about the game I just took it as it comes and really developed little over time.

"I certainly never thought of becoming a professional soccer player.

"I actually thought I would do better as a tennis or rugby league player.

"My parents did not want me playing league as a relative got injured playing it and they encouraged me along the soccer road.

"All my friends played soccer so that was okay."

Ray finished school in 1992 (he had attended Benedict College) and he tried out for Bank-

stown City and they picked him up.

In his first year there he played as right midfielder in the Super League club's under 18s, and then played as a wing-back in second grade.

His second year of second grade saw a premiership title for his team.

Then through 1995 and 1996 Younis made the first team where he played right stopper/midfielder, interchanging with Steve Eagleton (now at Sydney United).

"The state league was certainly physically demanding however you could afford to make a mistake or two and you would not be punished," he says.

"The squads were not huge either so I never felt my position in the side was really threatened.

"Once more I could go into a game and not really have to think about what I was doing."

In 1996 Younis was supposed to head down Wollongong way but complications in the transfer meant he had one more year of state league until he finally joined the Wolves last season.

"Marconi, Sydney

United, and Newcastle were also interested but Nick Theodoropoulos being the salesman he is won me over

when he called me up late one night and said come over and he put the contract in front of me.

"Marconi had trialed me for a week and Lee Sterrey was interested but Zoran Matic wanted another week's trial and that is when Nick came in."

For Younis entry into the NSL was a beginning for his path to learn how to play football.

"That first year I knew I would be playing in the seconds," he said.

"I knew I had a long way to go and that there were a lot of players who were better than me ahead of me.

"As a youngster I had never learnt how to think a game in your head.

"My coaches were never properly trained so I never learnt about stopping the ball, delaying runs or anything of that

nature.

"Just three seasons before I was playing in the sixth division of a local competition and now here I was in the NSL playing against guys who had been to the AIS and World Youth Championships.

"I learnt by watching the other players.

"Matt Horsley taught me a lot by what he did on the field.

"Robbie Stanton always gives me advice on how I should do things as we travel to training together each day along with Les Pogliacomi.

"That is why playing striker has been hard, I have never felt the instincts were there for me to be up front.

"At least on the right I can feel the right thing to do, but up front I sometimes choke as I am not sure what to do.

"The more and more I play and the more help the coaches give me the better and more confident I have become playing up front.

"I have scored goals, four in pre-season and two against Marconi, but I know I could have scored more.

"I prefer right midfield as my pace and fitness could give me an upper hand.

"We have to move away from the mums and dads being coaches to our young players"

"If I am striker laying balls off does not come naturally, pop a ball over the top and I will chase them down all day, that is more natural to me."

In fact his pace nearly kept Younis from soccer.

"I used to love my sprint and weight sessions," he said.

"However in the end I was being paid for soccer and played that mainly, to the disappointment of my sprint coach as I had come down to the 10.7 mark.

"Even then, I did not watch soccer, just played it.

"When I got home I would not have time to watch sport on TV so I

never even watched European football.

"It has not been until the last couple of years that I have come to respect and watch players like Giggs and Zidane."

"I also learnt a lot from Doug Utjesenovic when I was at Parramatta.

"He helped me a lot teaching me how to make runs, lay the ball off and stop with the ball.

"It was an education I had needed at eleven but was now getting."

Younis played eight games back in the Super League during the off season, scoring six times.

It was something that built his confidence up as exemplified in his pre-season form for the Wolves.

"I am much more confident these days and believe I should be in the first team squad," he says.

"The coaching from the staff and players over my last two clubs has helped me come a long way in a short period of time but I do know there is a way to go yet, but I am still willing to listen and learn."

Off the field Ray Younis finished a Bachelor of Human Movement de-

gree and picked up a job as a teacher at Saint Charbel's College Punchbowl where he is



"I would give up my teaching job to become a full-time footballer.

"I think I could learn a lot and give the club a lot.

"I want to play for the next ten to fifteen years so I want to improve my fitness even more, and I would prefer to switch back onto the right side of the field eventually."

Perhaps if the Parramatta venture comes off he could one day play

some bigger exposure so it is something I am considering at present.

"Some people have written it is playing for Lebanon itself but it is not, it is just playing against other representative sides in Lebanon from around the world.

"You could pick up a

contract to play in their national league if you wanted."

So, what does Ray Younis teach his kids at school about becoming better players?

"Observe, look and learn," he says.

"It does not matter if it is good or bad, copy the good things and try and avoid the bad.

"I never watched soccer and that was my biggest mistake, it means even now I am well behind where I should be.

"Never be too big to learn, because you can always add things to your game.

"Plus at a young age learn the technical aspects of the game.

"Never get bored of learning about the game on the field and off it."

As for coaches Younis approves of the FIFA drive for all coaches to be registered.

"We have to move away from the mums and dads being coaches to our young players," he says.

"Those are the most crucial years and we must have qualified coaches at those times to teach the kids how to think about a game and teach them the skills that they need for future years.

"That is why Europe has such a great amount

of kids coming through playing the game, and we need to replicate that."

I said at the beginning that the Ray Younis story is unusual but perhaps it is not.

For 99% of us out there we have all played in those teams like St Johns and never thought of representative sides or the NSL, we just played to enjoy the game.

Where Ray was fortunate is he got one chance to move up and took it with both hands.

Most probably the reason he has held onto it so well was his willingness to watch, listen and learn.

Ray Younis is not the full package yet but give it time, his own dedication to get back to the fitness he once had, and more coaches willing to teach him about the game and he could yet be one of our great players.

South Melbourne go Greek

South Melbourne is set to establish a link with Greek league champion club Olympiakos.

Under the agreement Olympiakos would be given a feeder relationship with South, the current Ericsson Cup champions. In return the Blues would look to secure players on loan from the many-times Greek champions.

However, both the Greek and Australian leagues are played concurrently and it is likely that on-loan players would be either players coming back to fitness or first team squad players surplus to requirements. And South defender Con Blatsis is expected to travel to Olympiakos for trials in March.

Sterrey wants in

Rookie Newcastle Breakers coach Lee Sterrey has asked his club to place their faith in him - by agreeing to a two year extension to his current deal.

"I'm not going to re-sign for an extra year extension, I want to sign for an extra two and I think a three-year stint's fair enough," said the coach who has worked a minor miracle on a shoestring budget in

his first ever NSL season.

"I'm a full-time coach and I'd hate to be on the unemployed lines tomorrow. The season for us, if we don't make the play-offs, ends in April. I've put a lot of time and effort into the job here this year but I know we've still only scratched the surface, promotion-wise, marketing - a lot of areas need to be addressed."

Carlton off-load

MELBOURNE NSL side Carlton has placed four fringe players on the transfer list.

The players are Cameron Pino, Ivica Klarica, Jovanovic Novacevski and Mile Medjedovic. The youngsters have all failed to establish themselves at the club and Carlton are looking to replace them with promising young players from their Colts team. Novacevski was the club youth team's top scorer last season while Klarica won the Southern NYL Player of the Year award.

Vlahos transfer continues Aussie drain

By John White

Carlton Soccer Club announced late last week that Andy Vlahos had signed for Greek First Division giants Panathinaikos.

The transfer is the second overseas off-load by the Victorian club following the transfer of Vinnie Grella to Italian side Empoli earlier in the season.

It also follows the exodus of other Aussies such as Kosta Salapatis and Tansel Baser, both first team regulars at their respective clubs and players who have moved during the current season.

At a time when Carlton are struggling to attract crowds the Vlahos transfer poses a number of questions.

Vlahos was the only player to have played in every game for Carlton — and with a one week suspension due to take effect last weekend his record was due to tumble either way.

"Panathinaikos has paid a substantial transfer fee," said Carlton in an official press release.



"Panathinaikos and Carlton Soccer Club look set to develop a long-term relationship as a result of discussions between Panathinaikos President and owner, Yorgis Vardinoyannis, and Carlton Soccer Club General Manager Lou Sticca."

Rumours which were rife in the pre-season about Carlton having to sell players to survive will be fuelled by the transfer of Vlahos, even although it is undoubtedly a good career move for the player.

"We are all very delighted that Vlahos has

signed with such a great club like Panathinaikos," said Carlton coach Eddie Krncevic.

"However the departure of Vlahos, opens the door for another player.

"I must now sign another player to keep the pressure on the team in the race for the finals."

Arnold faces another two tough games in fight for a Top Six spot

By Gordon Dexter

NORTHERN Spirit, fresh from a crushing 4-0 win over high-flying Marconi, faces another two top five teams in a hectic holiday week spell coach Graham Arnold says will determine the club's season.

On Sunday Spirit played the first of those three important games away to fellow Sydney-siders Sydney Olympic.

Northern Spirit coach Graham Arnold believes his side needs six points from those three matches to make a concerted push for a national soccer league playoff spot.

"We've got three tough games against teams higher than us on the table and if we can get away with six points (two wins) we'll be well on our way to making the top six," Arnold said before shaping up against Olympic.

Today (Tuesday) the north Sydney side plays the second of those games with a glamour Australia Day fixture



tance of following up the Marconi win with some strong performances," Arnold said.

"...we are confident we can sustain the form which saw us belt Marconi 4-0 last week."

Arnold's selection dilemma surrounding the striker's position has been solved with Clayton Zane succumbing to a back injury.

Eighteen-year-old Daniel Watkins and experienced Robbie Slater, who unlocked the Marconi defence with a goal each, retain their places upfront.

"I have always had the intention of bringing Daniel along slowly but he looked very good against Marconi," Arnold said.

"Clayton is out so that has made the decision a lot easier."

Former Tottenham player Ian Crook is also out this week after aggravating a calf injury last week against Marconi.

against second placed Perth when a bumper 20,000 crowd is expected.

This will be followed by another high-profile match at North Sydney Oval, against third placed Sydney United three days later, when again the stadium is again expected to be packed to the rafters.

The fledgling club was eighth on the ladder, but just one point behind Carlton in fourth spot at the beginning of the important trifecta.

"We have a tough week ahead and the players know the impor-

City drops out

BACK IN 1977 Canberra City was one of the founding clubs in the inaugural National Soccer League.

Never regarded as one of the league's strongest teams, except for one memorable season, City nevertheless introduced a number of quality players to top class Australian soccer including Steve Bryant, Tony Henderson, Frank Farina, Jimmy Cant and Manis Lamond.

However, league reconstruction in 1986 saw the club which by then had been taken over by Downer Olympic drop out of the top flight.

Backed by the licensed City Club they still played a part in local ACTSF soccer.

In 1996 they became a



Former star Steve Bryant was the coach of Canberra City when it played its last season in senior football in 1998

stakeholder in the Canberra Cosmos club shortly after it had begun its own desperate bid to play at the highest level.

But the sad news from Canberra last week was that after

more than 21 years the club would not field a senior team for the first time ever.

Mounting financial difficulties led to this although ironically the City club were saviours of the cash strapped Canberra Cosmos on more than one occasion providing office facilities free of charge as well as their initial cash injection of \$100,000 which was backed up by later amounts.

The sum required to field a team in the ACT Premier League next season was about \$30,000 but unable to guarantee that amount the club has withdrawn.

The club will continue to field sides in the state, masters and women's leagues.

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Captain Oly to remain in Oz

By Alan Clark

OLYROO captain Brett Emerton pledged his playing future career to Australia – at least until the Olympic Games in late 2000.

"I have had a couple of offers, but I've made the decision to stay in Australia until the year 2000 so I'm going to stick by it," said Emerton after the second of the two Olyroo Challenge matches in Melbourne on Friday.

The Sydney Olympic midfielder and goal-scorer, soon to turn 20, has had overseas interest, but believes his future will be more assured if he bides his time.

"I'm going to spend my time here and just try to improve and be the best player that I can," he said.

"Everyone's got different ideas about what they want to do – some want to head overseas, some have the same idea as me."



BACK ON THE BALL

SBS's popular soccer magazine programme, *On The Ball*, made a quiet return to the TV screens on Friday January 15 when it was screened as a segment in the Toyota Sports programme. The re-vamped show is hosted by Les Murray and features Johnny Warren, Andy Harper, Kyle Patterson and Paul Williams.

Wollongong drop prices



The empty Grandstand at Brandon Park during an Ericsson Cup match this season highlights the plight of Wollongong as supporters have boycotted the club over increased ticket prices

By Stuart Bell

WOLLONGONG Wolves have reacted to public opinion by lowering prices for grandstand seats.

The Brandon park club created controversy at the beginning of the season by listing stand seats at \$20 – for both children

and adults. Criticisms in *Inside Soccer* seemed to have little initial effect although that has now changed.

"The club reacted badly to the criticism of their policy," a member of the Wolves marketing group told *Inside Soccer*.

"The club needs to raise more revenue to

compete with other wealthier clubs and it was considered that a general raising of admission prices was the way to do it. But crowds at Brandon Park this season have been nothing short of a disaster, fans are staying away in droves.

"Even the figure for the Sydney Olympic fixture

was down a couple of thousand on last season and that has traditionally been our best attended game."

Now the club has offered special family packages of \$40 for two adults and two children in an attempt to woo fans back to the empty spaces of the upper stand.

No revival for world's oldest international

An increase in competitive international fixtures appears to have killed off all hope that the world's oldest soccer fixture, the England-Scotland match, can be revived.

There had been suggestions from both countries that the match, first played in 1872 and then staged on an annual basis until 1989, might be re-instituted.

But that hope was ended by David Findlay, assistant director of administration for the Scottish Football Association.

"Everyone recognises that

we ended our agreement because of an increasing difficulty of finding an appropriate slot and in general terms the match was being pushed further and further back at the end of the season," he said on Friday.

"Since the late 1980s when the fixture was dropped it has not become any easier, in fact it has become harder, to find an appropriate date.

"With the increase in the number of teams allowed in European and world competitions, and with FIFA deciding

when internationals are to be played, it has become quite a difficult proposition to agree on an annual match on a specific date.

"We live in hope but if you were to ask me if it were possible to have the match in place in the next two, three or four years I would say no."

The two countries have met in 108 official internationals, England winning 44 and Scotland 40. The only meeting since '89 came during the first round of Euro '96 at Wembley when England won 2-0.

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Rescue mission alive at United

CASH STRICKEN Sydney United raised \$60,000 prior to last weekend's away trip to Newcastle Breakers, ensuring their short term survival at least.

However, one player alone is said to be owed that amount in back wages over two seasons.

Reports also say that prominent Croatian businessmen are ready to invest \$20,000 if they can be guaranteed two seats on the club's new board.

One report has also indicated that a non-Croatian businessman is ready to pitch in a substantial sum if the club can revert back to

its previous Croatian identity insignia.

Fund raising projects are continuing all over Australia in an attempt to bail out the west Sydney club.

Should Sydney United fold then Soccer Australia has confirmed that its players would come under the short term ownership of the federation.

Already agents for other Ericsson Cup clubs have made unofficial approaches to top gun Mile Sterjovski, talented youngster Joel Griffiths and several other key players in the team.

Sterjovski has made a huge impact in this season's NSL.

NSWSF 1999 SUPER

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 1

Saturday 06 February
Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Bankstown City Lions
Macarthur Rams v Central Coast
Blacktown City Demons v Eastern Suburbs
Sunday 07 February
Ryde City v Fairfield Bulls
Leichhardt Tigers v Parramatta Eagles
Canterbury Marrickville v Sutherland Sharks

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 2

Saturday 13 February
Macarthur Rams v Blacktown City Demons
Sutherland Sharks v Central Coast
Sunday 14 February
Parramatta Eagles v Ryde City
Eastern Suburbs v Leichhardt Tigers
Fairfield Bulls v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Bankstown City Lions v Canterbury Marrickville

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 3

Saturday 20 February
Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Parramatta Eagles
Blacktown City Demons v Sutherland Sharks
Sunday 21 February
Bankstown City Lions v Fairfield Bulls
Ryde City v Eastern Suburbs
Leichhardt Tigers v Macarthur Rams
Canterbury Marrickville v Central Coast

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 4

Saturday 27 February
Blacktown City v Central Coast

Sunday 28 February
Macarthur Rams v Ryde City
Sutherland Sharks v Leichhardt Tigers
Eastern Suburbs v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Parramatta Eagles v Bankstown City Lions
Fairfield Bulls v Canterbury Marrickville

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 5

Saturday 06 March
Fairfield Bulls v Parramatta Eagles
Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Macarthur Rams
Sunday 07 March
Bankstown City Lions v Eastern Suburbs
Ryde City v Sutherland Sharks
Leichhardt Tigers v Central Coast
Canterbury Marrickville v Blacktown City Demons

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 6

Saturday 13 March
Canterbury Marrickville v Parramatta Eagles
Blacktown City Demons v Leichhardt Tigers
Central Coast v Ryde City
Macarthur Rams v Bankstown City Lions
Sutherland Sharks v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Sunday 14 March
Eastern Suburbs v Fairfield Bulls

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 7

Saturday 20 March
Fairfield Bulls v Macarthur Rams
Central Coast v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Sunday 21 March
Canterbury Marrickville v Leichhardt Tigers
Bankstown City Lions v Sutherland Sharks
Parramatta Eagles v Eastern Suburbs
Ryde City v Blacktown City Demons

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 8

Saturday 27 March
Blacktown City Demons v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Central Coast v Bankstown City Lions
Sutherland Sharks v Fairfield Bulls
Macarthur Rams v Parramatta Eagles
Sunday 28 March
Eastern Suburbs v Canterbury Marrickville
Leichhardt Tigers v Ryde City

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 9

Friday 02 April
Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Leichhardt Tigers
Bankstown City Lions v Blacktown City Demons
Fairfield Bulls v Central Coast
Eastern Suburbs v Macarthur Rams
Canterbury Marrickville v Ryde City
Saturday 03 April
Parramatta Eagles v Sutherland Sharks

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 10

Sunday 04 April
Macarthur Rams v Canterbury Marrickville
Ryde City v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Leichhardt Tigers v Bankstown City Lions
Blacktown City Demons v Fairfield Bulls
Monday 05 April
Central Coast v Parramatta Eagles
Sutherland Sharks v Eastern Suburbs

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 11

Saturday 10 April
Bonnyrigg W Eagles v Canterbury Marrickville

Sunday 11 April
Fairfield Bulls v Leichhardt Tigers
Macarthur Rams v Sutherland Sharks
Bankstown City Lions v Ryde City
Parramatta Eagles v Blacktown City Demons
Eastern Suburbs v Central Coast

THE FINALS SERIES

Weekend 10/11 July
Elimination Semi Final: Lambert Park
Preliminary Semi Final: Seymour Shaw Field
Weekend 17/18 July
Minor Semi Final: Serbian Centre or Jensen Park
Major Semi Final: Melita Stadium or Gabbie Stadium
Sunday 25 July
Preliminary Final: venue TBA
Sunday 01 August
Grand Final: venue TBA

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 12

Saturday 17 April
Central Coast v Macarthur Rams
Sunday 18 April
Bankstown City Lions v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Fairfield Bulls v Ryde City
Parramatta Eagles v Leichhardt Tigers
Eastern Suburbs v Blacktown City Demons
Sutherland Sharks v Canterbury Marrickville

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 13

Saturday 24 April
Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Fairfield Bulls
Blacktown City Demons v Macarthur Rams
Central Coast v Sutherland Sharks
Sunday 25 April
Canterbury Marrickville v Bankstown City Lions
Ryde City v Parramatta Eagles
Leichhardt Tigers v Eastern Suburbs

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 14

Saturday 01 May
Macarthur Rams v Leichhardt Tigers
Central Coast v Canterbury Marrickville
Sunday 02 May
Parramatta Eagles v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Fairfield Bulls v Bankstown City Lions
Eastern Suburbs v Ryde City
Sutherland Sharks v Blacktown City Demons

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 15

Saturday 08 May
Central Coast v Blacktown City Demons

Sunday 09 May
Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Eastern Suburbs
Bankstown City Lions v Parramatta Eagles
Canterbury Marrickville v Fairfield Bulls
Ryde City v Macarthur Rams
Leichhardt Tigers v Sutherland Sharks



Australia's Leading State Competition —

LEAGUE FIXTURES

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 16

Saturday 15 May

Macarthur Rams v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Central Coast v Leichhardt Tigers
Blacktown City Demons v Canterbury Marrickville

Sunday 16 May

Eastern Suburbs v Bankstown City Lions
Parramatta Eagles v Fairfield Bulls
Sutherland Sharks v Ryde City

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 17

Sunday 23 May

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Sutherland Sharks
Bankstown City Lions v Macarthur Rams
Fairfield Bulls v Eastern Suburbs
Parramatta Eagles v Canterbury Marrickville
Ryde City v Central Coast
Leichhardt Tigers v Blacktown City Demons

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 18

Saturday 29 May

Blacktown City Demons v Ryde City

Sunday 30 May

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Central Coast
Sutherland Sharks v Bankstown City Lions
Macarthur Rams v Fairfield Bulls
Eastern Suburbs v Parramatta Eagles
Leichhardt Tigers v Canterbury Marrickville

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 19

Sunday 06 June

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Blacktown City Demons
Bankstown City Lions v Central Coast
Fairfield Bulls v Sutherland Sharks

Parramatta Eagles v Macarthur Rams
Canterbury Marrickville v Eastern Suburbs
Ryde City v Leichhardt Tigers

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 20

Saturday 19 June

Blacktown City Demons v Bankstown City Lions
Central Coast v Fairfield Bulls

Sunday 20 June

Leichhardt Tigers v Bonnyrigg White Eagles
Sutherland Sharks v Parramatta Eagles
Macarthur Rams v Eastern Suburbs
Ryde City v Canterbury Marrickville

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 21

Sunday 27 June

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Ryde City
Bankstown City Lions v Leichhardt Tigers
Fairfield Bulls v Blacktown City Demons
Parramatta Eagles v Central Coast
Eastern Suburbs v Sutherland Sharks
Canterbury Marrickville v Macarthur Rams

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 22

Sunday 04 July

Canterbury Marrickville v Bonnyrigg W Eagles
Ryde City v Bankstown City Lions
Leichhardt Tigers v Fairfield Bulls
Blacktown City Demons v Parramatta Eagles
Central Coast v Eastern Suburbs
Sutherland Sharks v Macarthur Rams

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS

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Clapham Park, Sefton

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Home Ground:
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2 Narara Crescent
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Home Ground:
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Home Ground:
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Wentworth Park Road, Ultimo

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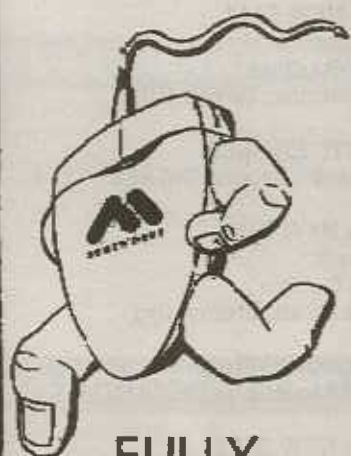


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Robertson walk out rocks Demons

DEFENDING NSW Super League champions Blacktown City were rocked on the eve of the current campaign with the resignation of coach Alex Robertson.

The former Sydney City star is said to have quit the club after a dispute involving the signing of a player.

It is said that Robertson wanted to sign his son Sean but the club refused, citing a conflict of interest.

However, the Super League powerhouse moved quickly to install former Falkirk and Melbourne Juventus player Brian 'Bomber' Brown in the hot seat.

"We made the appointment last Tuesday," said club administrator Ken Schembri.



"Sure, it was bad timing losing Alex Robertson but that happens in football."

"Brian Brown will do a

good job for us this season so we just have to put the past behind us and get ready for the season."

The 1999 NSW Super League season kicks off on Saturday 6 February, just over one week away.

The defending champions are drawn at home to Eastern Suburbs who have been rocked by financial problems in the off-season.

This is the last season that the Super League will play in non-summer with the historic decision to mirror the Ericsson Cup as from October this year.

That means a busy year for the second tier

competition as clubs face what is virtually eighteen months of continuous football.

"We have lost three or four players at Blacktown City," added Schembri, "but it is the same every year."

"I am sure that we will be competitive again this year."

The biggest losses from last year's successful side will be Steve Berry and Damon Langan, both transferred to Ericsson Cup clubs.

VPL Changes

TWO RADICAL CHANGES have been introduced to the 1999 Victorian Premier League season which kicks off this weekend.

Firstly, and perhaps most controversially, is the ruling that no NSL player shall be able to transfer into the VPL after January 31. This will stop clubs 'buying' places as has happened regularly in recent past seasons.

The second is the scrapping of the finals series.

This year the VPL will finish in July with a first-past-the-post winner. The Premier League is set to commence as a summer competition in October 2000.

Armstrong to spearhead Westvale

By Bruce Campbell

LAST season striker Lachlan Armstrong scored 32 goals as Westvale won the Victorian First Division competition.

That form saw the former Scottish Premier League and NSL player once more the subject of attention from Ericsson Cup clubs.

The offer of a short term contract at Gippsland seemed too good an offer to refuse for the player who turned his back on a big money offer from Canberra Cosmos to live in his home town of Melbourne.

But the good news for the newly promoted Eagles is that Armstrong has decided that his immediate future lies in the Victorian Premier League.

"The Falcons coach Stuart Munro was really good about it," said Armstrong of his decision.

"He understood me and I suppose that he really saw it coming as well."

"It is a big strain travelling down to Morwell all

the time and it is hard for them to attract players from Melbourne because of that."

Ironically, Armstrong once travelled ten thousand miles to pursue his own football dream, serving an apprenticeship with Dundee in the Scottish Premier League.

"Looking back I don't regret a thing," he said, "but I would never advise other young players to do what I did."

"There are so few who actually make it - even from the apprenticeship ranks."

"In my year only three of us out of a total of 10 actually got offered contracts - and that was considered a high number."

Instead Armstrong has elected to develop an off-field career in parallel to his part time football with Westvale, something which he hopes will pay dividends in the future.

"I think I've got a lot to offer football," he says, "not just on the park but hopefully off it as well."

"I think that I would eventually like to go into coaching also."

But Armstrong laughs when asked if he fancies a media career like Paul Wade who was his teammate at Cosmos as well as colleague in a regular weekly radio show.

"No, not if I have to keep on bumping into Wade!" says the player whose razor sharp wit has become legendary in the game.

"I enjoyed my time back at the Falcons and am grateful to Stuart Munro for giving me the chance but for now I think Westvale is a good option."

"It is going to be a really hard season this year with four teams being relegated from the Premier League."

"Realistically, you would have to be happy with a mid-table spot but I could see that the relegation issue will be one in which a lot of clubs will be involved in for most of the season."

"Green Gully and Bulleen are maybe the two stand-out teams for the top of the league."

Westvale will be coached again this season



by Phil Stubbins who has taken them from Division 4.

Stubbins and Armstrong joined Westvale in 1994 on loan from Gippsland and it has been a combination which has seen a lot of success.

"In that first year we had Phil, myself, Kevin Muscat and Mike Chatzifinas in the team - and we were in Division 4 then," recalls Armstrong.

"It wasn't a bad team." Neither was the side that won promotion last year although Armstrong is realistic in his targets for the new season.

"I can't see me scoring 32 again," he admits.

Illawarra Round-Up

The Corrimal Leagues Club Cup is now a tradition in Illawarra Soccer since its establishment in 1962.

This year the competition will be played with eight groups playing at four venues; Bellambi, Tarrawanna, Fernhill and Memorial Park.

32 clubs have entered from Helensburgh to Nowra, from the Southern Highlands and also an Aboriginal side.

CRINGILA LIONS are currently engaged in the building of a 2000 seat grandstand at a cost of \$500,000.

Under President Naume Janeski the 1998 League Premiers have created a showpiece at their Crehan Park home.

The Lions have appointed former Fernhill coach Peter Willis to the coaching position following the departure of former Soccerroo George Keith.

And still likely to be running out for the Lions this season is Bobby Tupancevski who is in his 19th season with the club.

Two other players who can rack up 33 years service between them are Naume Gjorgeski and Isco Ataniso-ski who is making a come-back after breaking a leg.

PORT KEMBLA officials have hotly denied talks of a merger.

Rumours sweeping Illawarra have linked Port with Balgownie, now in the First Division.

But the Premier League glamour side is set to continue on its own with plans to upgrade its Primbee ground this season.

Last season the club fielded three Canberra-based players; Joe Campagna, Paul Roberts and Ben Harris. Of that trio only goalkeeper Harris will be back although coach Adrian Alston is said to be looking at signing Matt Valeri, son of former Canberra, APLA and Monaro star Walter Valeri.

And striker Frank Barila should also be back at the club if he can come to terms after failing to land a contract with Ericsson Cup side Newcastle.

ACT side Monaro will host Port Kembla at its Riverside Stadium Ground as part of its 30th anniversary celebrations on Sunday 7 February. The two clubs are also trying to arrange another match at Primbee.

Corrimal Leagues Cup groups:

*Cringila Lions, Kiama, Lysaghts and Wollongong Amateurs (playing at Memorial Park)

*Northern United, Shoalhaven City, University and Warilla Wanderers (playing at Memorial Park)

*Helensburgh Thistle, Bellambi, Port Kembla and South Coast United (playing at Bellambi)

*Balgownie Rangers, Bulli, Illawarra United and Shellharbour Barbarians (playing at Bellambi)

*Berkeley, Fernhill, Shellharbour City and White Eagles (playing at Towradgi)

*Corrimal Leagues Club, Highlands United and Woonona (playing at Towradgi)

*Albion Park, Dapto, Western Suburbs and Olympic (playing at Tarrawanna)

*Aborigines, Coniston Lions, Picton Rangers and Tarrawanna (playing at Tarrawanna)

ILLAWARRA SOCCER fans are in for a bumper season with *Inside Soccer* ready to commence a major feature section on the local game.

with thanks to Otto Bader

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Round 1

Sunday 31 January

Fawkner Blues v St Albans Saints

6pm Smith Reserve

Bentleigh Greens v Altona Magic

6pm Kingston Heath

Altona East v Sunshine Georgies

6pm Paisley Park

Preston Lions v Springvale White Eagles

6pm Goodyear Stadium

Port Melbourne Sharks v Westvale

6pm Anderson Reserve

Monday 1 February

Green Gully Cav v Melbourne Raiders

8.15pm Green Gully

Bulleen Inter Kings v South Dandenong

8.15pm Veneto Club

Read David Arnold's VPL Match of the

Round report exclusively in *Inside Soccer*

Match details believed to be correct at time of going to press from information supplied. Please check with VSF for late changes.

Talking Soccer

with Carlton S.C.'s
SEAN DOUGLAS

One of the hot topics of the moment is that of the Auckland Kings entry into the Ericsson Cup.

And as I mentioned last week I have managed to get an interview with one of the people behind the Kings bid.

Chris Turner, a self-employed businessman and ex-All White is part of the organising committee running the Kings engine room.

He took time out from his busy schedule to answer a few questions, and provide *Inside Soccer* with its (and any other paper's) first look at the Kings set-up.

Chris, I'll start off with the basic questions. Have you actually been officially accepted into the league for next season? "We have been accepted into the Ericsson Cup by Soccer Australia.

"We're in the final process now of making the entry legal.

"Our solicitors are just putting the finishing touches on all the required paperwork."

It has been reported in the media in Australia that the Auckland Kings bid was required to pay over \$1 million in "licensing fees". What does this fee entitle the

Kings franchise to, and what guarantees does it give you?

"Firstly, I can't confirm or deny the amount of the licensing fee.

"It is a business matter between ourselves and Soccer Australia.

"But the fee does give us a five year license in the Ericsson Cup."



Wynton Rufer: a hot tip for the Kings coaching job

Do you have a coach, or a coaching shortlist as of yet?

"We don't have a shortlist, as we haven't even advertised the position yet! But this hasn't

stopped the people interested in the position.

"We've had 12 potential applicants from both New Zealand and overseas already registering their interest in the job -

it seems to be a very popular position.

"We will be advertising soon and will call for coaches from both within NZ and overseas."

(Continued next week)

New signing Plunkett might bring a touch of black magic to Knights

By Quentin Poulsen

IF LANCE Plunkett, the Melbourne Knights new signing, is seen refusing water or digging holes in the ground during games, it could be a throwback to the season he has just spent in the Maldives Islands.

The 21-year-old midfielder played for the New Radiant team which reached the third round of the Asian Cup Winners Cup last year.

The team invariably drew home crowds of around 20,000 - not bad for an island of just four square kilometres with a population of just 80,000 people.

Plunkett's most cherished memory was scoring in front of such a home crowd during a 3-1 loss to Hong Kong side, Happy Valley.

Soccer was professionally organised in the Maldives, he said.

The six premier teams all competed in Asian competition and included imports from throughout the world.

However, one nexus of the tiny Indian Ocean republic's less civilised past was the use of witch

doctors to ward off evil spirits and bring good fortune to the team.

It was common practice for the witch doctors to 'inhume players' spirits' by writing their names on pieces of paper and burying them in the soccer field, said Plunkett.

They were also often required to kick the ball into the net before the game to show the players there was no invisible shield in front of the posts.

Plunkett recalls one instance when his side became convinced an opposing team's witch doctor had placed a demon in their water supply.

The players refused to drink anything but sterilised bottled water that week.

Witch doctors are not likely to be a factor in Plunkett's involvement with the Knights, although given the club's mid-season status of second to last don't be surprised if new coach Joe Biskic starts turning up to games with magic beads and lizard tongues.

Plunkett is confident the side will be a force in the future, with talented

youngsters such as 18-year-old Parma trialist Frank Bazzano in the ranks.

However, he believes the club needs to become "more professional."

For his part, Plunkett has pledged to give 100% to the Knights and be more professional in his own approach.

"I'm looking forward to it and I want to give it my best shot," he said.

"Playing as a full-timer will be a new experience for me."

Prior to his stint in the Maldives, Plunkett had spent a season playing for the Hibernian youth and reserve grade sides in Edinburgh.

This followed a four week trial with Arsenal.

The trial was brought about by former Manchester United player Ken Morton, who had coached Plunkett in Tasmania and would again coach him in the Maldives.

Morton has recently been invited to run a coaching academy at Walsall, near Birmingham.

Born in England and raised in Bouganville, Perth (where he played

premier grade Australian Rules), then Hobart, Plunkett played for Olympia in the Tasmanian State League as a 15-year-old.

His brothers Garth, 19, and Jethro, 17, currently play in that league while his father Gavin is a Tasmanian over-50s soccer representative.

But Plunkett then quit the game for two and a half years to concentrate on another major passion, equestrianism.

He returned in 1995 and played for South Hobart and had planned to transfer to Melbourne before gaining the Arsenal trial.

Plunkett's invitation to play for the Knights this season was challenged by an offer from fellow-strugglers, Wollongong Wolves.

He opted for Melbourne because it was closer to home and he plans to study sports business management at the Victoria University of Technology.

Plunkett is confident he will, strengthen the Knights attack with his passing game and ability to switch play.



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GLADESVILLE RAVENS U6 to Premier League Reg Zeneli 9802 8205	GLADESVILLE RSL U6 to Premier League Rhett McCormish 9874 3341	GLADESVILLE UNITED U6 to All Age Andrew Christodoulou 9181 2856	GLENHAVEN U6 to All Age Bruce Fraser 9899 2312	HILLS HAWKS U6 to All Age Lyle Reading 9653 2779
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Alan Clark talks to Olyroo boss Raul Blanco

It's time to be selfish

By Alan Clark

OLYROO coach Raul Blanco has lots to do if Australia is to meet his country's expectations - unrealistic though many are - about picking up a medal at the 2000 Olympics.

Managing team selection and training players widely dispersed around the globe is his biggest worry.

The recent four match series against first China, and more recently South Korea, gave Blanco the opportunity to try out players under international conditions, but will it be enough?

Inside Soccer caught up with Blanco after the second of the two matches against South Korea, both of which - disappointingly - were lost.

The Olyroo coach first responded to those who have been disappointed with his team's recent run: "We've played four games against good opponents and I keep saying to people that it's an incredible arrogance as far as I'm concerned if everybody thinks that now we can play anybody and beat them."

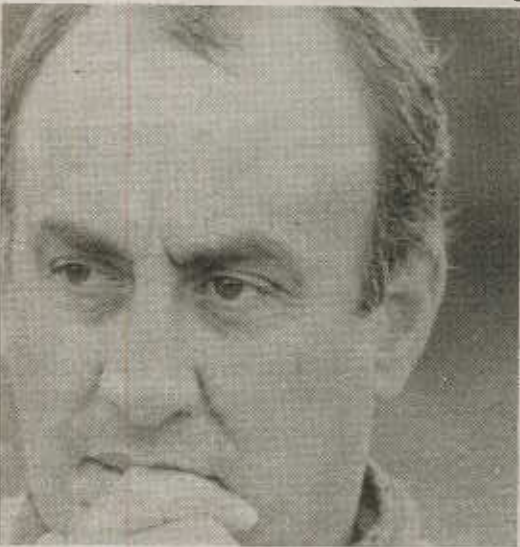
"I said this after the games against Brazil and Argentina when everybody was raving about us."

"I thought: just put our feet on the ground, take it easy, it's a long way to go."

"The team needs a lot of hard work yet before we will be who we want to be."

"I'm saying the same thing (now as) I said when we were winning, it's not like I'm trying to gain some time."

Asked about the value of playing the recent series and the chances of the current squad to be in the team Australia fields at the Olympics, Blanco said: "Those four games have been very important, especially because



it's allowed me to see some players who I wanted to see under pressure and in international conditions."

"The closer it gets to the Olympics, the more important it is for me to see them so I can form my final opinion."

"I think I have a good idea (about my likely team)."

"Bear in mind it's almost 18 months to go and there can be injuries and many things can happen, but I have a good idea now what the squad might look like."

Australia has many promising players overseas, and who might be expected to play in the team, but who were not brought back for

the two series.

When asked about that Blanco said: "The reality is we have 15 or 16 players in Europe."

"We can't get them. We can't bring 16 players at any time because we have a bit of travel."

"We have the same problem with the National team too."

"We have a very strong squad of players (playing in Europe) and if you talk about Damianos and Foxe, Harry Kewell, Mick Leeson, Tansell Baser, Vince Grella - countless players."

"It is a very, very strong squad, but we can't bring them here."

"That's the reality."

"We can't play in Europe either because to play there you have to get a game or two and the clubs are being very difficult to us."

"I think we'll have to wait for the competition to finish in Europe and try, if we can, to get some games there."

"Even then the clubs are saying that the players might have a compulsory rest of four or five weeks and then they have to resume pre-season."

"We will have a battle to make sure we get the squad together."

"I think the time has come that we need to now train our players (and form) the best teams."

Blanco wanted the Olyroo-supporting public to keep

things in perspective: "We have a long way to go and have a lot of hard work to do, and we should not get carried away."

"We always seem to be expecting some miracles, but miracles do not occur in football."

"I think hard work will solve problems, (there is no) other way."

"The most important thing

about these four games was it allowed me again to see some players who I wanted to see under international conditions."

"Now I've seen them. I know what they are capable of and now it's for me to decide what I want to do."

Three players were brought back from European competition for the South Korean games: Raphael Bove from Dutch club Heerenveen, Chris Coyne from English side West Ham, and Mark Robertson from English club Burnley.

How did Blanco think these players were considering the travel and other obstacles they faced?

"It doesn't matter who does it."

"First of all 30 hours away from the rest of the world."

"Every time I want to bring somebody (back to play here) it takes you four or five days or six days or seven days to adjust to the conditions, and when they go back, it's the same."

"We can't bring them for a short time - if it's a week, it's an impossibility."

"Unreasonable. Unhuman."

So what's the solution? "I think the solution would be to have a team in Europe with Europeans and have one team here and then decide every time we play what we need to do."

"It is very difficult to get the best at any time we want."

"If you were in Italy and you want a player from France you've got an hour and a half trip and you're back on Thursday morning."

"We keep playing interna-



"They gave me their best effort, and when somebody gives you the best effort that they can give you, that's as good as it can be."

"I think that some of them can do a little bit better but that's part of the game."

"They did a good job, they came from the cold weather, they had a long trip, they didn't know any of the boys, they had no understanding (of team matters) whatsoever, they've never been together in any way and I think those are things that if you know what the game is all about, you have to take into consideration."

"You don't meet people in four days and the understanding will be brilliant."

"It's an impossibility. Arrigo Sacchi told me that to achieve the pressing game that he did so brilliantly at AC Milan, it took him six months."

"And that was with Gullit and Van Basten, champions of champions."

"If it takes a bit of time, then obviously you don't expect in five days you are going to produce something extraordinary."

"I think the players who came here did quite a good job."

"I have a wonderful opinion about them - we lived together, we trained together, and they played two international games."

With the plethora of Australian players playing overseas, how difficult is it looking after our national teams?

"Coaching Australia is one of the most difficult jobs in the world."

"It doesn't matter who does it."

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"If you were in Italy and you want a player from France you've got an hour and a half trip and you're back on Thursday morning."

"We keep playing interna-

tional games and people want to see Australia win and play beautifully and we do know that maybe (the present situation of not obtaining overseas players) is not the best."

But eventually, the overseas players will be needed to play for Australia for a World Cup qualifier, or for the Olympics. What then?

"I think when the time comes I will have to look at the team carefully and decide where the team needs to be strengthened, but we have some very wonderful talent and I am currently in a good position."

"We have a law which we can apply (to obtain the players)."

"We can enforce the law and say the players must come."

"Soccer Australia Chairman, Basil Scarsella, just came from overseas where he was meeting with (FIFA President) Blatter, and obviously he expressed the views that we are in a very difficult position and we need to come to some agreement and understanding."

"Everybody's very selfish, everybody wants to do what is best for them and we have to become selfish ourselves and do what is best for us."

"In many different ways we have been very kind and always we try to make sure that we don't create problems and we don't upset things (but) we might have to in the future."

"We've been giving, and now I feel we have to start to take."

Asked about the likelihood of whether Joe Simunic would be considered if he now declared his interest in playing for Australia when previously he sought to play for Croatia, Blanco responded: "Nobody's struck off the list. I do know what Joe said in the press and on television."

"He wanted to represent Croatia. It was very clear, and everybody saw it - I wasn't the only one."

"Obviously as a coach, we respected his wishes. I'm going to Europe very soon and hopefully if I can get the opportunity I would like to sit with him and clarify if that is still in his mind or if there is a change of direction that he wants to take, but as I said, they were his words and they were his views, and we were respectful to that and this is why we never went (back to him) because it was very clear he wanted to play for Croatia."

THE STARS OF TOMORROW

National Youth League Round-up

With Roy Hay

National Youth League SOUTHERN DIVISION

Leading Goalscorers

Andrew Mashoian (South Melbourne) 11

Jovanco Novacevski (Carlton) 6

Scott McDonald (VIS) 6

Deniz Ekicic (Carlton) 5

Tony Ouliaris (Carlton) 5

Erhan Bayraktar (South Melbourne) 5

Bulleen v VIS

The only match in the Southern Division this week-end was a catch-up game from Round 12 in which Bulleen recorded the big upset of the season with a four-nil win over the Victorian Institute of Sport.

Michael Gulino got behind the defence and bent a shot around the keeper after 21 minutes, then Rocc de Vito fired in a well struck effort from around 20 metres in 36 minutes.

Any prospect of a VIS revival was nipped in the bud by Paul Salvatore two minutes after the interval, when he followed up to score after two good saves by the VIS keeper.

Gulino's second goal after 69 minutes sealed the victory.

Robert Bresciano, younger brother of Marco of Carlton, Nathan Thomas Gulino and De Vito were the pick of the Bulleen players who will remember this victory for some time to come.

Denis Vucinic played well for the VIS as did substitute Daniel Rainey.

NORTHERN DIVISION

Leading goalscorers

Mark Hagger (Marconi) 15

Russell Miner (QAS) 12

Simon Catanzaro (NSWIS) 9

Kevo Guleserian (AIS) 9

Daniel Kukucka (Sydney United) 9

Anthony Bauer (Newcastle Breakers) 8

Chad Mansley (Newcastle Breakers) 8

Paul Tuturevski (Wollongong Wolves) 8

Joe Bruni (Marconi) 7

Tony Bauer (Newcastle Breakers) 7

Anthony Mondello (Marconi Colts) 7

Jim Bakis (Sydney Olympic) 7

Ali Jomaa (Sydney Olympic) 7

Sasho Dimovski (Wollongong Wolves) 7

Marconi v AIS

Mark Hagger's late penalty goal gave Marconi Fairfield a win by a goal to nil over ACTAS in a Round 20 match played in midweek.

AIS v Wollongong

With four matches postponed by the weather on Saturday, the Northern Division program was much reduced too.

In the matches which went ahead on Friday, Elias Dimoutzidis scored both goals for the AIS in its two-nil win over Wollongong Wolves at Brandon Park.

It was a good game according to Steve O'Connor, and the AIS created lots of chances, but managed to take only a couple of them.

The Wolves fought hard, but could make no impression on the AIS defence.

Newcastle v Sydney United

Newcastle Breakers lost at home to Sydney United by two goals to nil. Both United goals came late in the game.

Greg Collins scored after 78 minutes, then Joe Moric converted a penalty kick to make the margin a little more comfortable.

Olympic v Spirit

Finally Sydney Olympic downed the league leader Northern Spirit by two goals to one.

Olympic led two-nil in the first half with goals by Leo Carle and Lee Miott.

Then its grip slackened and Spirit came back with a single goal by Adam Snyder, but Spirit could not find an equaliser.

Marconi Postponed

It is understood that Marconi's next three games will be postponed as the club is taking part in an Italian tournament.

Otherwise there was a full round of matches on Australia Day and these will be reported on next week.



Eclipse do Brisbane double

Canberra Eclipse shot into outright first position in the Women's Soccer League with a brilliant last minute goal from substitute Kim Channing to defeat QAS Sting 2-1 on Sunday in Brisbane.

Canberra has a three-point lead ahead of last year's finalist NSW Sap-

phires and SASI Pirates whose two clashes this weekend in Sydney were postponed due to wet conditions.

On Saturday Eclipse moved to equal first place with a tight 1-0 victory over QAS Sting in the first of two games.

Cindy Doyle scored the winning goal in the 76th minute.

Marconi strike out at Bossley

By Anthony Raineri

Brisbane Strikers reinforced their reputation as Marconi-Fairfield's National Soccer League bogey team with a 2-1 victory at Marconi Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

Marconi has beaten the Queenslanders only four times in 17 matches including a 3-2 opening round defeat last October.

Brisbane began confidently and was rewarded for attacking play with a goal in the 26th minute by rookie Des Hughes who has scored twice in his only four NSL appearances.

Marconi fans looked on in horror as their defenders seemingly watched the 21-year-old have a free shot into the bottom right hand corner of the goal.

The slack marking was explained a couple of

minutes later when both central defenders Mark Babic and Dominic Longo hobbled off the ground with toe and groin muscle injuries, respectively.

"To lose both your centre backs at the same time is a bit of a nuisance," Marconi coach Frank Farina said, "we found it difficult to adjust."

The home team equalised five minutes after half-time through striker Sean Babic.

South Korean Pan-Keun Kim swung the ball in from the right, veteran striker Francis Awaritefe knocked it back to Olyroo Christian Care whose half-hearted shot deflected off a Brisbane defender.

The ball fell into the path of Babic who easily slotted it home.

Six minutes after Babic's strike Hughes broke down the right, beat his marker and cut it back to Olyroo Kasey Wehrman who goaled with a clean strike from just inside the penalty box.

Brisbane coach John Kosmina said his team was eager to win after last week's unlucky 1-0 loss to lowly Newcastle.

"I was surprised Marconi gave us a lot of space early on," the former Socceroo captain said.

"That gave us the confidence to go on. The whole team played well."

"We are now on 22

points and we are aiming to finish on 42 points which means we need six more wins and two draws."

Marconi's Farina said apart from a five minute period in the second half, his team did not deserve to win.

"Like last week (4-0 loss to Northern Spirit), we were overpowered," the former Brisbane Strikers grand final captain-coach winner said.

"We are not fighting for the ball or showing enough hunger and aggression."

"At the start of the season that was our strength."

"It has to come from within. You can't teach it."



Glen Gwynne: the Brisbane captain was inspirational

MARCONI FAIRFIELD 1 (S Babic)
BRISBANE STRIKERS 2 (D Hughes, Wehrman)
 Venue: Marconi Stadium
 Man of the Match: Glen Gwynne BRIS

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United defy off field problems

By Steven Smith

Cash-strapped Sydney United showed that despite the financial problems besetting the club it is a real title chance with a 1-0 Ericsson Cup victory over Newcastle Breakers at Breakers Stadium on Friday night.

Right-back David Barrett scored the only goal of the game in the 76th minute, but despite the closeness of the scoreline the Sydney team impressed with its mobility and speed of ball movement.

Veteran defender Velimir Kupresak was immaculate at the back for United while Walter

Ardone ran the show in midfield until going off injured late in the second half.

The Breakers had the first chance in just the second minute but South Korean striker Sang-Chul Yoon shot weakly past the post.

Minutes later, some trickery by Ardone earned him a scoring chance but Breakers goalkeeper Bob Catlin was good enough to save at the near post.

The best chance of the first half fell to young Sydney striker Joel Griffiths who stole in behind the Breakers defence and sent a glancing header just wide.

Just after halftime the

luckless Griffiths missed two glorious chances to open the scoring for United.

After the Breakers defence had made a mess of clearing a cross from the right the ball fell to Griffiths 12 metres out but he blazed his shot over the bar and then seconds later he stabbed a shot wide.

The Breakers were creating chances of their own but in the 60th minute Mark Wilson took too long to get a shot in and then John Buonavoglia created a shooting chance for himself but once again Crews was well placed to save.

Two further chances fell to United, midfielder Michael Santalab had a shot deflected over the bar and then Griffiths had another chance after Catlin had missed a cross ball but his header flew

just wide.

United took the lead they had been threatening in the 76th minute when right-back David Barrett burst onto a loose ball in the Breakers penalty area rounded Catlin and fired home left-footed into an empty net for a rare goal.

Eight minutes from the end Griffiths had a chance to double United's lead after Catlin had been put under pressure from a bad back-pass and his hasty clearance fell to the United striker 35 metres out but Griffiths' first time attempt went just wide with the Breakers' keeper well out of position.

United is now just one point behind pacesetter Perth Glory going into the Australia Day holiday round of fixtures.

Defence kills Wolves hopes

By Josh Clampton

Carlton virtually killed off the faint playoff hopes of Wollongong Wolves with a 2-1 victory in Friday's clash at Brandon Park.

The Wolves desperately needed a win after starting round 17 in 12th spot, eight points out of the top six.

But an unmarked header from Andrew Marth and clever run through the heart of Wollongong's defence by Simon Colosimo earned Carlton a decisive 2-0 halftime lead.

Wollongong poured on the pressure in the second half but Michael Brooks' 84th minute goal was only to prove a consolation.

An exasperated Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos said he had seen this type of performance too often this season.

"Each week we've dominated teams but haven't finished with the result," Theodorakopoulos said. "We created eight chances tonight against one of the best

**WOLLONGONG 1 (Brooks 84)
CARLTON 2 (Marth, Colosimo)
Venue: Brandon Park
Man of the Match: Paul Reid WOLL**

sides in the league and lose 2-1. They really only had one chance aside from the corner but still made us pay."

Marth gave Carlton the lead in the 15th minute, drifting into space to head home a Robert Markovac near-post corner.

Then on 36 minutes Colosimo waltzed between several Wolves defenders to score.

Brooks pulled one back for the Wolves after a neat move involving captain Matt Horsley and substitute Esala Masi but the comeback was left too late.

Despite Carlton goalkeeper Adrian Cagalj not having to make a save before halftime Wollongong had the two best chances of the half.

Striker Ray Younis blasted over the bar in the opening minutes, then in injury time midfielder Noel Spencer found

space but his header from just six metres was tame.

Wollongong continued to pour on the pressure after halftime but to no reward.

Midfielder Paul Reid, Spencer and Masi all had good chances for Wollongong but couldn't convert.

With a two goal lead Carlton was able to soak up most of the Wolves' pressure after half time with Colosimo and Sean Douglas outstanding in defensive roles.

Tricky striker Joe Tricarico was also a handful to the Wollongong defence and was a part of most of Carlton's best moves. Reid had a terrific game for the Wolves and though on a beaten side was arguably the man of the match.

Carlton's victory completed the double over Wollongong this season after winning 4-0 in the opening round.

Munro sees hat trick of reds

South Melbourne overcame its injury worries to hand a 4-1 thrashing to straggler Gippsland Falcons and strengthen its hold at the top of the national soccer league.

Gippsland has never beaten South Melbourne in a league match but held out for half an hour on Saturday before falling apart after having defender Michael Anderson sent off in a controversial decision in the 40th minute.

South was without David Clarkson, Steve Panopoulos, Goran Lozanovski (all injured) and Nick Orlic (suspended) and also left side striker Michael Curcija who was on the bench after his draining game for the Olyroos the night before.

But John Anastasiadis, getting his first start for nine games, took full advantage of the opportunity by scoring the opening two goals for South.

Anastasiadis broke the deadlock in the 30th minute slotting in the rebound after Falcons' keeper Bojo Jevdjovic parried the initial shot from Vaughan Coveny from the right.

Anastasiadis then headed against the bar in the 38th and

two minutes later was held back by Anderson as he attempted to run clear onto a through pass.

Referee Barry Panella deemed the incident to be a clear goal scoring situation and flashed the red card to Anderson even though the defender hadn't been booked earlier in the match.

Anastasiadis got his second goal in the 55th due to a drastic mistake by Clayton Bell, who fell over the ball in his attempt to clear allowing the South striker to swoop and slam the ball into the goal.

Anastasiadis was substituted shortly after but his replacement Curcija continued the good work by getting the next goal - this time tapping home after the Falcons' keeper dropped a cross shot from Jason Polak.



Perinovic: set up consolation

Coveny made it four with a pile driver from outside the box after receiving a short free kick in the 76th minute.

Falcons' netted a consolation goal five minutes from the end when substitute Archie Thompson finished off after substitute Marko Perinovic headed down.

Gippsland Falcons have now had six red cards against them this season and have failed to finish with the full complement in the past three matches, a point well noted by coach Stuart Munro.

"I've seen referees letting similar types of fouls go without even giving a free kick," Munro said of the Anderson incident.

"The referees seem to stick to the letter of the law with the struggling sides."

Munro was however more disappointed about the way the goals were conceded.

**GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1 (Thompson)
SOUTH MELBOURNE 4 (Anastasiadis 2, Curcija, Coveny)
Venue: Mobil Park
Man of the Match: Paul Trimboli SMEL**

ERICSSON CUP SOCCER

Ericsson Cup Round 16: 29-31 January

Sunday 31 January

Northern Spirit v Sydney United ***

North Sydney Oval 5.00pm

Adelaide City v Canberra Cosmos

Hindmarsh Stadium 7.00pm

Melbourne Knights v Gippsland Falcons

Knights Park 6.00pm

Sydney Olympic v Marconi Fairfield

Belmore Sports Ground 6.30pm

Perth Glory v Newcastle Breakers

Perth Oval 5.00pm

Carlton v Adelaide Sharks

Optus Oval 6.00pm

Wollongong Wolves v South Melbourne

Brandon Park 6.30pm

Bye: Brisbane Strikers

***** denotes ABC Match of the Round**

SOCCER AUSTRALIA SCORES UPDATE SERVICE

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NOTE: all information believed correct at time of going to press. Please check with daily press, your club or Soccer Australia for changes to scheduled kick offs.

ASF (02) 9380 6099, Adelaide City (08) 8336 9077, Adelaide Sharks (08) 8351 9866, Brisbane Strikers (07) 3252 5327, Carlton (03) 9389 6213, Canberra Cosmos (02) 6281 7981, Gippsland Falcons (03) 5134 5529, Marconi Fairfield (02) 9823 2222, Melbourne Knights (03) 9699 4188, Newcastle Breakers (02) 4951 2722, Northern Spirit (02) 9460 2187, Perth Glory (08) 9383 9911, South Melbourne (03) 9645 9797, Sydney Olympic (02) 9558 5355, Sydney United (02) 9823 6418, Wollongong City (02) 4226 3988

Penalty settles Glory

Adelaide City stole a thrilling one-goal victory in injury time over the Perth Glory in Perth.

The Zebras defied 35-degree heat and a vocal crowd to come away from soccer's toughest road trip with a 2-1 victory.

Bradley Hassell put the Zebras in front with an opportunistic goal in the 91st minute.

A penalty shot from striker Damien Mori deflected from Perth goalkeeper Danny Milosevic and the midfielder pounced on the loose ball.

The first half was a

tough struggle in which neither side could gain the upper hand.

Perth did all the attacking for most of the first half but were clumsy in front of goal.

Adelaide was starved of opportunity by Perth's defence and only had two realistic chances, but both of these were denied by Glory goalkeeper Milosevic.

Fullback Craig Deans continued his

good form from last week which earned him his first starting position with another solid display.

Adelaide looked for Mori on every opportunity but tough defender Gavin Wilkinson had his measure.

It was Adelaide captain Alex Tobin who eventually broke through in the 69th minute when he headed a corner past Milosevic into the top of the net.

The Glory fought back and dominated the next 10 minutes, culminating in replacement Con Boutsianis putting a penalty beyond the reach of Zebra goalkeeper Jason Petkovic into the net.

The Glory sensed victory and peppered Adelaide's goal but could not score.

Then, when a draw seemed inevitable, the home side gave away a penalty and Mori and Hassell did the rest.

PERTH GLORY 1 (Boutsianis)
ADELAIDE CITY 2 (Tobin, Hassell)
Venue: Perth Oval
Man of the Match: Gavin Wilkinson ADLC



Perth Glory's Troy Halpin

Olyroos go down in Melbourne storm

By Alan Clark

The threatened late-afternoon thunderstorms predicted for Melbourne last Friday afternoon teasingly held off until just after the 7:36pm kick-off at South Melbourne's Bob Jane Stadium, then arrived with a vengeance, threatening to cause an early end to the match in a particularly fierce ten minute period just after half-time.

By then, with almost all of the estimated 4,000 crowd huddled under the welcome shield of the grandstand's roof and taking as much interest in the elements as the match, South Korea was one goal up following a 25th minute opportunist goal from Ki-Hyeon Seoul.

Seul had stolen in behind Chris Coyne after a long diagonal ball had been played from just inside the half. Aided by the wind, it had carried over Coyne who had to turn and so did not notice Seoul's late run and the consequent potential for danger.

Seul's finish from seven metres was never going to be stoppable despite Joe Didulica's valiant attempt.

Conditions were difficult even then - just minutes before, Olyroo captain Brett

Emerton had conceded a corner from near the half-way line - and there was to be little opportunity for the teams to play a coherent passing game.

But this was to prove little disappointment to spectators, as what then transpired was football's equivalent of one-day cricket - uncultured graft and slog in the teams' attempts to get the better of the conditions.

There would be no profit in attempting fine touches or delicate play.

Just before the break, Seul received a clever cut back from Hyo-Yeon An who had got to the bye-line.

Seul's shot was deflected for a South Korea corner.

Given the peculiar nature of the match, it should have been no surprise that this would then lead to result in the Olyroos' most convincing attacking moment.

The corner was quickly cleared to Mile Sterjovski who rapidly made ground up the left, choosing the moment precisely for his incisive cross to Jacob Burns with the visitors' defence hopelessly stretched.

Burns' shot hit the angle of the crossbar and the post when a goal was the more deserved outcome.

The storm increased in intensity during the break with most areas of the pitch now under water.

And then things got worse.

Five minutes into the second half, referee Mark Shield held lengthy separate discussions with both coaches as a wall of water descended.

Visibility was minimal, even if the players could keep their eyes open given that the horizontal rain was stinging as it hit.

Olyroo coach Raul Blanco said: "The referee said to me that he thought it was dangerous to play in those conditions because he felt that the players were not able to see."

"He said to me 'Do you want to carry on, or wait a little bit longer and then we'll discuss the issue again?'"

"I said: 'You're the boss, and you make the decision'. I thought at that time, even if it was very heavy rain, it didn't look that the players could (see each other)."

"You didn't want to put the welfare of the players at risk. I said to him: 'Whatever the decision you want to take', and he said he would play a little bit longer and if thought it wasn't good enough he would stop the game for ten minutes. But he was the boss

and I left it to him."

South Korea's Jung-Moo Huh, speaking through a translator, said: "We told the referee that we would agree to the decision of the Australian team. He asked us for the second time to stop the match for ten minutes, then continue (later). We said 'Let's see for a while, then either (abandon the match completely) or continue'."

Whilst these touch-line negotiations were proceeding in the driving rain, an enterprising television technician attempted to intervene, clutch-

ing a microphone and seeking to have a few words with the referee for the television audience.

He was brusquely waved away by the sodden official.

So the match continued, although the football was over.

And the spectacular lighting over the city skyline kept the good-spirited crowd amused rather as does a New Year's eve fireworks display.

But there were isolated incidents which reminded us we were there for a sporting contest.

Joe Didulica increased his

reputation with a penalty save after Coyne brought down An, who himself took the spot-kick.

Midway through the second half, Michael Curcija found his way through the swamp to turn Jae-Won Sim, only to launch his shot over.

With the clouds exhausted, and just as it seemed the second Olyroo Challenge would conclude as did the first, with South Korea winning 1-0, Sinozic managed to put the ball over Didulica in a fittingly bizarre end to a totally surreal evening.

AUSTRALIA U23s 0
SOUTH KOREA U23s 2 (Seol 25, own goal 89)
Venue: Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne

Friday 22 January 1999

Venue: Bob Jane Stadium, Albert Park, Melbourne

Referee: Mark Shield.

Assistants: Andrew Stacey, Senko Rastovic. Fourth Official: Jeremy Blaney.

Crowd: about 4,000 (unofficial)

Scorers: Seul 25, own goal 89.

Australia: Joe Didulica, Raphael Bove, Chris Coyne, Sebastian Sinozic, Mile Sterjovski (Peter Buljan 61), Jacob Burns, Mark Robertson, Brett Emerton (c), Kasey Wehrman (Michael Garcia 70), Michael Curcija (Christian Care 75), Jason Culina. Subs not used: Levent Osman, Dragi Nasteovski, Zeljko Susa, Nathan Wildy.

Yellow Cards: Curcija, Culina.

South Korea: Yoo-Seok Chung, Se-Kwon Cho, Jin-Sub Park, Jae-Won Sim (c), Jae-Hong Park (Dae-Hoon Chung 70), Dong-Hyuk Park, Nam-Il Kim (Do-Kyun Kim 36), Kwan-Woo Lee (Chul-Woo Choi 78), Hyo-Yeon An, Ki-Hyeon Seoul, Dong-Gook Lee (Rae-Cheol Park 78).

Subs not used: Sang-Tae Lee, Byung-Ho Sin, Dong-Jin Han.

Yellow Cards: Hyo-Yeon An, Jin-Sub Park.

Knezevic saves Cosmos hiding

By Sam Lienert

Canberra Cosmos picked up its second point of the NSL season on Sunday, helped by a terrible own goal from Adelaide Sharks defender Alex Duric.

The Cosmos took the lead early in the game and held it until 10 minutes into the second half when Sharks substitute Joel Porter levelled for a 1-1 draw, Canberra's second in two games.

The Canberra goal came as a result of a shocking mix-up between Duric and goalkeeper David Miller in the 13th minute of the match.

Duric was 15 metres out from his own goal and under no pressure when he made a back pass without looking to notice that Miller had come out from goal.

The slow pass rolled to Miller's right and just beat his desperate right-foot lunge as he raced back in an attempt to clear it from the line.

The one-nil halftime scoreline defied the pattern of play with Canberra's forwards rarely threatening to score a goal from their own boots while the Sharks had a string of chances.

Adelaide's Richie Alagich came close to making a quick reply when he hit a hard 25-metre strike in the 14th minute but Canberra goalkeeper Vilson Knezevic made a brilliant left-handed leaping save.

Knezevic was the hero again two minutes later when striker Derek Poimer weaved past three defenders and had only the keeper to beat from 15 metres but his shot was cut off.

The Sharks also earned six corner kicks in the first half but some tight defending by Cosmos, particularly Danny Burt and Amarildo Miglietti, kept their side in front at the break.

Knezevic came under strong attack in the second half with the Sharks des-

ADELAIDE SHARKS 1 (Porter)
CANBERRA COSMOS 1 (own goal)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Man of the Match: Vilson Knezevic CANB

perate to break their run of four straight losses.

He continued to pull off some amazing saves in a best afield performance but could do nothing to stop the headed goal from Porter 10 minutes into the second half.

Porter headed it home from the left post after a well-placed cross from Alex Castro from deep on the right side.

He had a shot from 10 metres out after a deflection off goalkeeper Miller but his right-footer hit the left post to leave the scores level.

Adelaide coach Manfred Schaefer said after the match he found it difficult to believe the amount of ways his team could prevent itself from winning games.

"Sometimes we seem to

"We certainly know how to destroy ourselves, I have never come to a team before that really keeps finding a different way."

But he said his team still had hopes of making the top six despite going winless in the past five matches and he was pleased they had a quick chance to atone for Sunday's performance against South Melbourne on Tuesday.



Adelaide continued to attack for most of the half but could not take the lead and Canberra's Peter Buljan went desperately close to giving his side its first win in the final minute of the match.

find ways to punish ourselves completely against the run of play," Schaefer said.

"That goal was completely against the character of Alex Duric, there was just no reason for it.

"We don't have to wait until next week, we play on Tuesday, it is not over yet, we have two hard games coming up which will certainly sort us out," Schaefer said.

Ten man Spirit inspired by Slater

By Krystyna Rudzki

A determined Northern Spirit overcame an early sending off to beat Sydney Olympic 3-2 in an incident-filled national soccer league game at Belmore Sports ground on Sunday.

Seven yellow cards were handed out by referee Simon Micallef who sent off defender Mark Rudan after a crude challenge on Olyroo Brett Emerton in the 28th minute.

The red card offence was Rudan's second this season and second against the same team.

Captain Robbie Slater was the inspiration for the Spirit, scoring the first goal at the ten minute mark.

A free kick by Kresimir Marusic 25 metres out was knocked down to the left foot of Slater who simply slotted the ball in.

Slater launched many an attack down the left flank easily throwing off the Olympic defence - and far from falling apart with one man down, Spirit stepped up and it was Slater again who had the answer.

Paul Bilokapic deftly kicked back a free kick again to the left foot of Slater who doubled the score in the 31st.

Eight minutes later Olympic pulled one back.

Pablo Cardozo intercepted a Bilokapic pass to Mathew Langdon and easily found the back of the net directly in front of goal.

Cardozo nearly scored an equaliser soon after but his right side blast was touched over the bar by Spirit keeper Paul Henderson as Olympic finally began to pick up the pace.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 2 (Cardozo 2)
NORTHERN SPIRIT 3 (Slater 2, Enes)
Venue: Belmore Sportsground
Man of the Match: Robbie Slater SPRT



Slater: inspirational

Fifteen minutes into the second half Robert Enes scored his first goal for Spirit after a classy Marusic cross.

Confusion reigned just minutes later when a Cardozo goal was disallowed and Enes was fouled for a challenge on Olympic's Jason Culina.

Olympic picked up the pace with several chances saved or misfired but still Spirit had control but in the 88th minute Spirit substitute Paul Wearne tackled substitute Carlos Gonzalez.

The Wearne challenge on Gonzalez resulted in a penalty from which Cardozo duly scored.

Olympic coach Branko Culina was gracious in defeat but critical of his team's performance.

"All credit to Northern Spirit they played well, they fought hard and they took their chances.

"We gave the goals away and that killed us off.

"You shouldn't do that when you have eleven against ten but we did.

"That does hurt a little bit."

Spirit coach Graham Arnold sang the praises of Slater.

"Whoever writes off Slater for the national team is crazy he's still as mobile as ever," Arnold said.

The player-coach said he was 'delighted' to make the top six for the first time, but said there was still a long way to go.

SCOREBOARD

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ANSETT CHALLENGE

Saturday 23 January
QAS Sting 0 Canberra Eclipse 1

Sunday 24 January
QAS Sting 1 Canberra Eclipse 2

YOUTH LEAGUE

Southern Division: Round 12

Saturday 23 January

AIS 0 Bulleen Inter 4
Michael Gulino 2
Rocco De Vito
Paul Salvatore

Northern Division: Round 20

Marconi Fairfield 1 ACTAS 0

Mark Hagger

Round Sixteen

Friday 22 January

Newcastle Breakers 0 Sydney United 2
Chad Mansley 2 Greg Collins
Tony Bauer Joe Moric

Wollongong Wolves 0 AIS 2

Elias Dimoutzidis 2

Saturday 23 January

Marconi Fairfield v QAS

Northern Spirit Colts v Sydney Olympic Academy

Wollongong Wolves Colts v ACTAS

Sydney United Colts v Marconi Fairfield Colts
(All four matches postponed because of the weather)

Sunday 24 January

Sydney Olympic 2 Northern Spirit 1
Leo Carle Adam Snyder
Lee Miott

NSWIS v Bye

ERICSSON CUP

Friday 22 January

Wollongong Wolves 1 Carlton 2
Scorers: Brooks 81 WOLL; Marth 14, Colosimo 36 CARL

Venue: Brandon Park

Crowd: 2,626

Referee: M Breeze

Cautions: Anthopoulos (CARL) 40, J Tricarico (CARL) 65, S Colosimo (CARL) 76, S Chipperfield (WOLL) 87.

Wollongong: Pogliacom, G Souris, Ceccoli, Stanton, Horsley, Brooks, Chipperfield, Younis (Masi 53), Spencer, Huxley (Surjan 64), Reid
Carlton: Cagalj, Anthopoulos, Stergiopoulos, Colosimo, Douglas, Marth, Atkinson, Moreira (Pir 85), Tricarico (Josifovski 66), D Cervinski, Markovac (Ouliaris 89)

Newcastle Breakers 0 Sydney United 1

Scorer: D Barrett 75 SUTD

Venue: Breakers Stadium

Crowd: 3,697

Referee: D Dwight

Cautions: R Shannon (NEWC) 38; P Bennett (SUTD) 89

Newcastle: Catlin, Pryce, Roberts (Umlil 75), McManus (Sanderson 87), Sprod, Ritchie, Wilson (Owens 60), Buonavoglia, Shannon, Haythornthwaite, Yoon

Sydney United: Crews, Barrett, Kupresak, Plesa, Vrkic, Santalab, Berry (Caletta 87), Ar-

ERICSSON CUP 1998/99

	home						away					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
1 South Melbourne	15	6	1	0	17	7	4	2	2	15	11	33
2 Sydney United	15	6	1	1	16	4	3	1	4	9	12	29
3 Perth Glory	15	5	1	2	15	8	3	2	2	15	10	27
4 Carlton	15	6	1	1	21	5	2	2	3	10	12	27
5 Adelaide City	15	5	2	1	17	5	3	0	4	6	9	26
6 Northern Spirit	15	4	2	1	9	4	4	0	4	9	12	26
7 Sydney Olympic	15	6	1	1	17	7	1	2	4	7	14	24
8 Marconi Fairfield	15	4	1	2	17	11	3	2	3	10	14	24
9 Brisbane Strikers	15	3	3	2	11	10	3	1	3	9	8	22
10 Adelaide Sharks	15	4	3	1	18	10	2	0	5	6	15	18
11 Newcastle Breakers	15	4	1	3	11	10	1	2	4	5	12	18
12 Wollongong City	15	2	3	2	15	10	2	1	5	8	19	16
13 Melbourne Knights	14	1	1	5	6	10	2	1	4	8	14	11
14 Gippsland Falcons	15	2	2	4	4	11	1	1	5	4	17	12
15 Canberra Cosmos	15	0	0	8	4	18	0	2	5	5	15	2

done (A Moric 76), Bennett, Day (Townsend 79), Griffiths

Saturday 23 January

Gippsland Falcons 1 South Melbourne 4
Scorers: A Thompson 86 GIPS; J Anastasiadis 30, 56, M Curcija 73, V Coveny 76 SMEL

Venue: Mobil Park

Crowd: 3,121

Referee: B Panella

Cautions: S Iosifidis (SMEL) 12, L Osman (GIPS) 22, W Hastie (GIPS) 40, A Thompson (GIPS) 56, A Vargas (GIPS) 89
Red Card: M Anderson (GIPS) 40
Falcons: Jevdjovic, Anderson, Bell, MacNicol (Savage 60), Osman, Thompson,

Hutchinson (Puca 60), Canosa, Vargas, Hastie, Becvinovski (Perinovic 55)
South Melbourne: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Coveny, Trimboli (Mustafa 67), Anastasiadis (Curcija 66), Cuzzupe, Polak, Goutzioulis, Tsekis, Liparoti (Taniouras 82)

Sunday 24 January

Adelaide Sharks 1 Canberra Cosmos 1
Scorers: J Porter 56 ADSh; A Duric og 12 CANB

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium

Crowd: 2,023

Referee: L Prospero

Cautions: C Artone (ADSH) 83
Sharks: Miller, Alagich, Castro, Kuzmanovic, Kokkinopitis, Artone, Milosevic, Thorp (Tibaldi 75), Poimer, Duric (Porter 45), Gibson

Cosmos: Knezevic, T Popovich, Burt, Marcina (Purdue 67), Magnacca (de Jesus), Buljan, Arranz, Langone (Gonzalez 78), Miglietti, Roberts, Wilson

Sydney Olympic 2 Northern Spirit 3

Scorers: P Cardozo 43, 87 SOLY; R Slater 9, 29, R Enes 54 SPRT

Venue: Belmore Sports Ground

Crowd: 9,151

Referee: S Micallef

Cautions: P Tsekenis (SOLY) 9, A Juric (SOLY) 18, J Culina (SOLY) 25, M Langdon (SPRT) 40, R Enes (SPRT) 55, C Kalantzis (SOLY) 75, E Bosnar (SPRT) 84
Red Cards: M Rudan (SPRT) 27

Olympic: Bouhoutsos, Thomas, Tsekenis, Tome Kalantzis 60, Culina, Cardozo, Emerson (C Gonzalez 80), Brennan (Baillie 60), Juric, Durakovic, Blagojevic
Spirit: Henderson, Arnold, Rudan, Bilokapic,

Langdon (Wearne 66), Moss, Enes, Cunico (Bosnar 82), Marusic, Slater (Mendez 72), Watkins

Perth Glory 1 Adelaide City 1

Scorers: C Boutsianis 80 PRTH, A Tobin 70, B Hassell 89 ADLC

Venue: Perth Oval

Crowd: 12,290

Referee: J Blaney

Cautions: P Strudwick (PRTH) 46

Glory: Milosevic, Trajkovski, Miller, Hay, Wilkinson, Deans, G Naven (Garcia 80), Strudwick (Boutsianis 70), Kalogeracos (Markovski 60), Despotovski, Halpin
City: Petkovic, Ivanovic, Tobin, Talladira, Mori, Veart (Mennillo 65), Costanzo, Has-

sell, Terminello (Yates 72), Sabljak, Kim

Marconi Fairfield 1 Brisbane Strikers 2

Scorers: Z Babic 50 MARC; D Hughes 25, K Wehrman 56 BRIS

Venue: Marconi Stadium

Crowd: 3,052

Referee: B Hugo

Cautions: C Care (MARC) 33, J Harris (BRIS) 44, V Tomasevic (MARC) 77

Marconi: Aceski, M Babic (Care 32), Longo (Farah 30), Kim, McDonald, S Babic, Maloney, Tomasevic, Awaritefe, Trajanovski (Gibson 59), Zoic

Brisbane: Bolton, Gwynne, Zoricich,

Wehrman (Tollenaere 73), McLaren, Srhoj, Harris (North 72), Meredith, Hughes, Davidson, Stefanutto

BYE: MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

Ericsson Cup Leading Scorers

13	Pablo CARDOZO (SOLY)
9	John MARKOVSKI (PRTH)
9	Mile STERJOVSKI (SUTD)
8	Vaughan COVENY (SMEL)
8	Michael CURCIJA (SMEL)
8	Alex MOREIRA (CARL)
7	Brad MALONEY (MARC)
7	Damian MORI (ADL)
6	Francis AWARITEFE (MARC)
6	Joe TRICARICO (CARL)
5	Peter BULJAN (CANB)
5	John GIBSON (ADSH)
5	Ivan KELIC (MELK)
5	Kresimir MARUSIC (SPRT)
5	Sasho PETROVSKI (WOLL)
5	Derek POIMER (ADSH)
4	John ANASTASIADIS (SMEL)
4	Con BOUTSIANIS (PRTH)
4	Marco BRESCIANO (CARL)
4	Simon COLOSIMO (CARL)
4	Alex DURIC (ADSH)

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

Northern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
1 Northern Spirit	15	11	1	3	30	11	34
2 Marconi Fairfield	15	9	5	1	46	12	32
3 AIS	14	9	4	1	51	11	31
4 Sydney Olympic	15	9	2	4	40	17	29
5 QAS	14	9	1	4	44	18	28
6 Newcastle Breakers	14	8	4	2	27	14	28
7 Wollongong Wolves	12	8	1	3	28	11	25
8 NSWIS	12	7	3	2	27	7	24
9 Sydney United	15	6	3	6	27	22	21
10 Marconi Fairfield Colts	14	5	1	8	15	25	16
11 ACTAS	15	3	1	11	23	42	10
12 Sydney United Colts	14	3	0	11	15	43	9
13 Northern Spirit Colts	14	2	2	10	14	56	8
14 Sydney Olympic Academy	14	0	3	11	9	45	3
15 Wollongong Wolves Colts	14	0	1	13	3	65	1

Southern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
1 South Melbourne	13	8	2	3	25	13	26
2 VIS	11	7	3	1	23	12	24
3 Carlton	12	7	2	3	28	14	23
4 Gippsland Falcons	14	6	2	6	23	23	20
5 Melbourne Knights	12	4	2	6	19	24	14
6 Bulleen Inter Kings	12	4	2	6	12	19	14
7 Albury Wodonga	12	0	1	11	12	37	1

4	Joel GRIFFITHS (SUTD)
4	Brad HASSELL (ADLC)
4	Robbie SLATER (SPRT)
4	Kris TRAJANOVSKI (MARC)
4	Sang-Choi YOON (NEWC)
4	Ray YOUNIS (WOLL)
3	Zeljko BABIC (MARC)
3	Bobby DESPOTOVSKI (PRTH)
3	Troy HALPIN (PRTH)
3	Harry KARL (MELK)
3	Goran LOZANOVSKI (SMEL)
3	Stuart McLAREN (BRIS)
3	Dino MENNILLO (ADLC)
3	Scott MILLER (PRTH)
3	Archie THOMPSON (GIPS)
3	Norman TOME (SOLY)
2	Walter ARDONE (SUTD)
2	Tansel BASER (SMEL)
2	Paul BILOKAPIC (SPRT)
2	Michael BROOKS (WOLL)

2	John BUONAVOGLIA (NEWC)
2	David CERVINSKI (MELK)
2	Sean CRANNEY (BRIS)
2	Brett EMERTON (SOLY)
2	Jerome HARRIS (BRIS)
2	Des HUGHES (BRIS)
2	Chris KALANTZIS (SOLY)
2	Vas KALOGERACOS (PRTH)
2	Dongi Ki KIM (ADLC)
2	Pan KIM (MARC)
2	Lubo LAPSANSKY (CARL)
2	Stephen LAYBUTT (BRIS)
2	Andrew MARTH (CARL)
2	Levent OSMAN (GIPS)
2	Gary OWENS (NEWC)
2	Jason POLAK (SMEL)
2	Joel PORTER (ADSH)
2	Shane PRYCE (NEWC)
2	Paul REID (WOLL)
2	Mark RUDAN (SPRT)
2	Michael SANTALAB (SUTD)
2	Mike SMITH (MARC)
2	Zelko SUSA (MELK)
2	Hamilton THORPE (ADSH)
2	Paul TRIMBOLI (SMEL)
2	Danny VIDAKOVIC (ADSH)
2	Andy VLAHOS (CARL)
2	Daniel WATKINS (SPRT)
2	Kasey WEHRMAN (BRIS)
1	Richie ALAGICH (ADSH)
1	Corey ARTONE (ADSH)
1	Elias AUGERINOS (SOLY)
1	David BARRETT (SUTD)
1	Clayton BELL (GIPS)
1	Peter BENNETT (SUTD)
1	Vinko BULJUBASIC (PRTH)
1	Christian CARE (MARC)
1	Nick CARLE (OLY)
1	Joe CALETA (SUTD)
1	Alvin CECCOLI (WOLL)
1	Steve EAGLETON (UTD)
1	Robbie ENES (SPRT)
1	Michael GARCIA (PRTH)
1	Andy HARPER (BRIS)

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SCOREBOARD

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ENGLAND

Monday 18 January

PREMIER LEAGUE

Aston Villa 3 Everton 0

Tuesday 19 January

F.A. Cup third round replay

Barnsley (I) 3 Swindon (I) 1

(Barnsley at home to Bournemouth in the fourth round)

DIVISION 1

Bradford 2 Crystal Palace 1

Friday 22 January

DIVISION 3

Mansfield 0 Rotherham

Saturday 23 January

Football Association (F.A.) Cup third round replay

Notts County (II) 3 Sheffield United (I) 3

Fourth round

Aston Villa 0 Fulham (II) 2

Barnsley (I) 3 Bournemouth (II) 1

Blackburn Rovers 1 Sunderland (I) 0

Bristol Rovers (II) 3 Leyton Orient (III) 0

Leicester City 0 Coventry City 3

Newcastle United 3 Bradford (I) 0

Portsmouth (I) 1 Leeds United 5

Sheffield Wednesday 2 Stockport (I) 0

Swansea (III) 0 Derby County 1

Wimbledon 1 Tottenham Hotspur 1

Wrexham (II) 1 Huddersfield (I) 1

PREMIER LEAGUE

Chelsea 22 11 10 1 34 18 43

Aston Villa 22 12 7 3 34 20 43

Manchester United 22 11 8 3 49 26 41

Arsenal 22 10 9 3 23 11 39

Leeds 22 9 9 4 36 20 36

Liverpool 22 10 5 7 43 26 35

Wimbledon 22 9 7 6 29 33 34

West Ham 22 9 5 8 25 31 32

Middlesbrough 22 7 10 5 32 28 31

Derby 22 7 10 5 22 20 31

Tottenham 22 7 8 7 28 30 29

Leicester 22 7 8 7 25 27 29

Sheffield Wednesday 22 7 5 10 25 22 26

Newcastle 22 6 7 9 26 31 25

Everton 22 5 9 8 13 24 24

Blackburn 22 5 6 11 21 29 21

Coventry 22 5 5 12 21 31 20

Charlton 22 3 8 11 26 36 17

Southampton 22 4 5 13 20 46 17

Nottingham Forest 22 2 7 13 18 41 13

DIVISION 1

Sunderland 28 17 9 2 59 19 60

Bradford 28 16 5 7 52 30 53

Bolton 27 13 10 4 51 33 49

Birmingham 28 14 7 7 43 26 49

Ipswich 28 14 6 8 37 19 48

Grimsby 28 14 5 9 33 29 47

Watford 29 12 10 7 44 38 46

West Brom 29 13 6 10 52 44 45

Norwich 27 11 9 7 43 37 42

Huddersfield 28 12 6 10 40 45 42

Wolverhampton 28 11 8 9 37 28 41

Sheff Utd 28 10 8 10 42 46 38

Barnsley 28 9 10 9 37 35 37

Crystal Palace 28 9 8 11 40 48 35

Swindon 28 9 7 12 39 45 34

Tranmere 28 6 13 9 34 40 31

QPR 28 8 7 13 31 38 31

Stockport 28 6 12 10 33 37 30

Bury 28 7 9 12 26 38 30

Portsmouth 28 7 8 13 35 44 29

Bristol City 28 5 10 13 38 55 25

Oxford Utd 28 6 7 15 29 51 25

Port Vale 28 7 4 17 29 52 25

Crewe 28 5 6 17 31 58 21

DIVISION 2

Preston 26 15 7 4 45 24 52

Fulham 25 16 4 5 37 20 52

Walsall 27 15 6 6 38 30 51

Stoke 26 15 3 8 37 23 48

Gillingham 26 11 11 4 39 22 44

Bournemouth 24 12 6 6 38 24 42

Chesterfield 27 12 6 9 30 23 42

Man City 27 10 11 6 32 23 41

Millwall 27 10 9 8 29 29 39

Reading 26 10 8 8 32 36 38

Wigan 26 10 7 9 36 26 37

York 28 9 8 11 37 46 35

Luton 25 9 7 9 33 33 34

Blackpool 27 8 10 9 29 32 34

Burnley 28 8 8 12 33 46 32

Bristol Rovers 25 7 10 8 36 29 31

Colchester 27 6 10 11 28 41 28

Wrexham 26 7 7 12 25 38 28

Oldham 26 7 6 13 27 38 27

Northampton 26 5 10 11 24 31 25

Notts County 25 6 6 13 26 37 24

Lincoln City 26 6 5 15 26 44 23

Wycombe 27 5 8 14 25 35 23

Macclesfield 25 4 9 12 19 31 21

BELGIUM

Monday 18 January

Genk 3

Ostend 0

Saturday 23 January

Lommel 2

Club Bruges 1

Sint-Truiden 2

Germinal Ekeren 0

Ostend 1

Kortrijk 3

Lokeren 4

Beveren 3

Anderlecht 3

Westerlo 2

Lierse 4

Charleroi 0

1. Club Bruges 21 13 4 4 38 22 43

2. Genk 20 12 5 3 44 23 41

3. Lokeren 21 11 4 6 45 30 37

4. Anderlecht 20 10 5 5 39 30 35

5. Excelsior Mouscron 20 9 7 4 41 33 34

6. Ghent 20 9 7 4 35 36 34

7. Standard Liege 20 10 2 8 30 22 32

8. Germinal Ekeren 21 9 4 8 35 32 31

9. Westerlo 21 9 3 9 43 37 30

10. Lierse 21 9 3 9 39 34 30

11. Sint-Truiden 20 8 6 6 28 24 30

12. Eendracht Aalst 20 7 5 8 30 35 26

13. Harelbeke 20 5 8 7 26 30 23

14. Charleroi 20 4 8 8 26 31 20

15. Lommel 21 5 4 12 23 34 19

16. Beveren 20 4 4 12 22 36 16

17. Kortrijk 21 3 5 13 30 53 14

18. Ostend 21 2 6 13 19 51 12

FRANCE

Saturday 23 January

French Cup first round

(II denotes second division, III

third, IV fourth, V fifth and VI sixth):

Sochaux 3 Beauvais (II) 1

Troyes (II) 2 Montpellier 1

Istres (III) 1 Nimes (II) 3

Paris FC (III) 1 Lorient 0

Saint-Denis/Saint-Leu (IV) 1 Angers (III) 0

Armentieres (IV) 2 RC Lens 5

after extra time - halftime: 2-2, full time: 2-2

Ajaccio (III) 1 Nice (II) 1

a.e.t. HT: 0-1, FT: 1-1. Ajaccio win 4-2 on penalties

Coulaines (V) 0 Rennes 4

Jura Sud Foot (V) 1 Toulouse 1

a.e.t. FT: 0-0. Jura Sud win 8-7 on penalties

Chaumont (V) 0 Sedan (II) 3

Le Mans (II) 4 Louh-Cuisseaux (III) 1

Blagnac (V) 0 Le Havre 2

En Avant Guingamp (II) 1 Red Star (II) 0

Dives (VI) 0 Lille (II) 2

Metz v Girondins Bordeaux match abandoned - fog

Dijon (IV) v Bastia match abandoned - fog

GREECE

Ethnikos Piraeus 2 Panelefsiniakos 2

Xanthi 2 AEK Athens 1

Olympiakos Piraeus 5 Panionios Athens 0

Ethnikos Astir Athens 1 PAOK Thessaloniki 0

Proodeftiki Piraeus 0 Ionikos Piraeus 0

Iraklis Thessaloniki 2 Apollon Athens 0

Paniliakos Pyrgos 3 Aris Thessaloniki 1

OFI Heraklion 4 Kavala 0

Veria 0 Panathinaikos 1

1. Olympiakos Piraeus 16 13 1 2 45 12 40

2. Panathinaikos 16 11 1 4 32 19 34

3. AEK Athens 16 10 3 3 35 15 33

4. PAOK Thessaloniki 16 10 2 4 26 17 32

5. Xanthi 16 9 4 3 19 13 31

6. Aris Thessaloniki 16 8 3 5 22 22 27

7. OFI Heraklion 16 8 2 6 24 19 26

8. Iraklis Thessaloniki 16 6 5 5 25 17 23

9. Ethnikos Astir Athens 16 7 2 7 22 24 23

10. Ionikos Piraeus 16 6 4 6 25 19 22

11. Panionios Athens 16 6 2 8 29 25 20

12. Kavala 16 5 5 6 26 36 20

13. Paniliakos Pyrgos 16 6 2 8 22 25 20

14. Panelefsiniakos 16 2 8 6 13 21 14

15. Proodeftiki Piraeus 16 3 5 8 15 22 14

16. Apollon Athens 16 2 4 10 19 42 10

17. Veria 16 1 4 11 6 24 7

18. Ethnikos Piraeus 16 0 5 11 6 39 5

ITALY

Sunday 24 January

Bologna 2

AC Milan 3

Inter Milan 5

Cagliari 1

Juventus 2

Perugia 1

Lazio 4

Piacenza 1

Salernitana 2

AS Roma 1

Sampdoria 1

Udinese 1

Venezia 2

Bari 1

Vicenza 0

Parma 0

IRELAND

Friday 22 January

Bray Wanderers 0

Finn Harps 0

Bohemians 2

Shelbourne

MOROCCO

Saturday 23 January

Royal Armed Forces 1

Mohammedia 0

Widad Casablanca 5

Moghreb Fes 0

Beni Mellal 1

Sporting Sale 0

Jeunesse Massira 1

Agadir 0

El Jadida 0

Khouribga 0

Widad Fes 0

Raja Casablanca 0

Marrakesh 2

FUS Rabat 0

Oujda 3

Meknes 1

SCOTLAND

Monday 18 January

SCOTTISH CUP

Second round

Queen's Park (III) 1

Clachnacuddin (ML) 1

Second round replay

Stirling (II) 2

Montrose (III) 1

Tuesday 19 January

DIVISION 1

Airdrieonians 0

Greenock Morton 2

Clydebank v Ayr postponed

DIVISION 2

Arbroath 2

Forfar 2

Wednesday 20 January

DIVISION 2

Livingston 1

East Fife 0

DIVISION 3

Dumbarton v Berwick postponed

Saturday 23 January

SCOTTISH CUP

(I denotes first division club, II

second, III third, ML minor league):

Second round replay

Clachnacuddin (ML) 2 Queen's Park (III) 3

(Queen's Park at home to Dundee United in third round)

Third round

Aberdeen 0

Livingston (II) 1

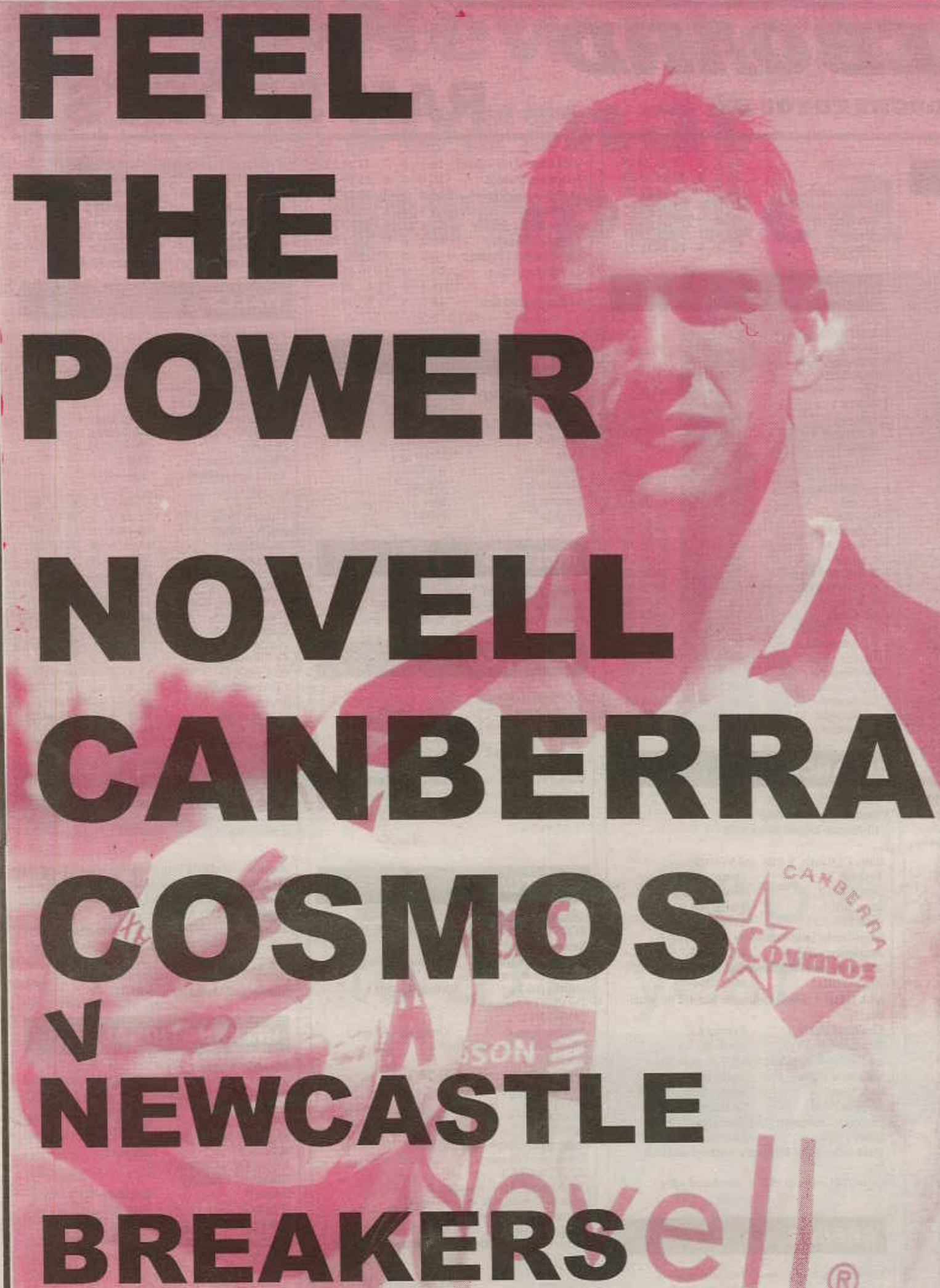
Ayr (I) 3

Kilmarnock 0

Brechin (III) 1

Albion (III) 1

Celtic 3

A man in a white soccer jersey with 'Novell' and 'Cosmos' logos is the background of the poster. The jersey has 'Novell' in large red letters and 'Cosmos' in a red star logo. The man is wearing sunglasses and has a serious expression.

FEEL THE POWER NOVELL CANBERRA COSMOS v NEWCASTLE BREAKERS

Bruce Stadium

Tuesday 26 January

KICK OFF 7.00pm

**PRINCIPAL SPONSOR:
NOVELL**